

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

ALTAR GUILD GUIDE



Note: A video that describes the general duties of the Altar Guild ministry is available at www.flclincoln.org.

Click on Get Connected – Serve – Altar Guild.

This guide contains more specific and up-to-date instructions.

Table of Contents

Contents

Altar Guild Duties During and After Communion – 8:15 & 10:45 AM	3
Communion Bread	4
Wine Pitcher.....	6
Individual Wine and Juice Cups.....	8
Pew Communion Tray (the rover tray)	11
Chalice for Altar.....	13
Baptismal font	15
Baskets for Cups	16
Hand Sanitizer	17
Linen Storage and Care	18
Sacristy Sink Care (Why is there a covered sink?).....	20
Altar Candles	21
How do I sign up to help?	22
Special Services	22

Thank you for serving on Altar Guild!

This ministry supports Holy Communion for First Lutheran Church.

Altar Guild performs the following:

- Set up Communion for each Sunday service.
- During Communion, monitor the serving and supply more wine, juice or bread as needed. (Take Communion, then go to the Sacristy and monitor.)
- Clean up the Communion service pieces after each service.
- Monitor/clean the altar and Communion rail areas.

Altar Guild Duties During and After Communion – 8:15 & 10:45 AM

1. After you take Communion, stand near the Sacristy door to watch the server stations. Be ready to supply bread or wafers, wine, and juice as needed. Each loaf provides about 50-60 servings, and we have been using most of 2 loaves for each service.

Note: The ushers take a count of attendees during the sermon, and then bring the number to the Sacristy (usually on a sticky note or written on the yellow pad on the Sacristy prep table). Check the attendance number to determine if more supplies are needed for the Communion service. (If there is not a count from the ushers, you can also take a quick head count or go look in the ushers' notebook at the usher stand.)

2. Use the doorstopper to prop open Sacristy door during Communion. After Communion ends close the door quietly. If you remain in the Sacristy for the last few minutes of the service, please do not start filling the sink with water until the door is closed, and keep conversation to a minimum – the sound carries into the sanctuary.
3. After the ministers/assistants have recessed during the closing hymn, bring the Communion items to the Sacristy.
4. Clean the altar and wipe down the plastic cover. Check for wax, wine and juice spots, and bread crumbs on the floor in front of the Communion rail, on the rail, and on the path to the stools holding the baskets for used cups. There is a vacuum in the Sacristy.

The following sections describe set up and clean up for each of the Communion elements and other items used in worship.

Communion Bread

First Lutheran Church uses gluten-free bread rolls, which are stored in the freezer in the kitchen.

During the service, the wine pitcher and bread plate are brought from the nave (Sanctuary west entry) to the altar along with the offering.

Homebound Communion: Leftover consecrated bread may be used by the lay ministers that take Communion to the homebound.

Set up for 8:15 service



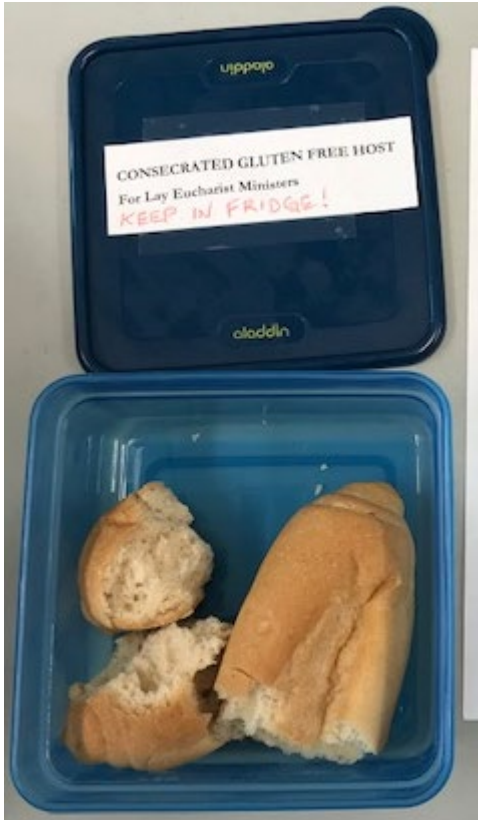


For each Sunday, retrieve 4 loaves (2 packages) from the freezer in the kitchen, and store in the Sacristy refrigerator until it's time to set up for a service. Typically 2 loaves are used per service.

Get the large pewter plate out of the lower cabinet to the right of the Sacristy sink.

Use a scissor to open packaging on two loaves. Discard packaging. Place the loaves on the plate and dry damp spots with paper towel, if needed. Cover plate with a large white square polyester cloth from the black linen cabinet.

Place the covered plate on the table in the nave (near Sanctuary rear west entry).



<p>Clean up from 8:15 service</p> 	<p>After the service, leftover bread will be on the large plate on the altar, wrapped in cloths.</p>  <p>Bring leftover bread into Sacristy.</p> <p>Take the blue box of leftover bread from last week from the Sacristy refrigerator, crumble the old bread in the box, and scatter for the birds outside door 1 (back of altar).</p> <p>Wash and dry the box.</p> <p>Put the new leftover bread from the 8:15 service in the box, and store in the Sacristy refrigerator.</p> <p>Wash and dry the plate.</p> <p>Put the soiled linens in the soaking container. If not soiled or overly wrinkled, they can be refolded and used for the second service.</p>
<p>Set up for 10:45 service</p>	<p>Same as 8:15, but use the remaining two loaves from the Sacristy refrigerator instead of getting new loaves from the church kitchen.</p>
<p>Clean up from 10:45 service</p> 	<p>Bring leftover bread into Sacristy.</p> <p>Add the leftover bread from the 10:45 service to the blue box of leftover bread from the 8:15 service. Store in the Sacristy refrigerator. If there is too much bread to fit, crumble the extra and discard out the door behind the altar.</p> <p>Wash and dry the plate, and store in the lower right cabinet. Insert the plate into its brown felt sleeve to store.</p>

Wine Pitcher

First Lutheran Church uses boxed wine. The currently open box is stored in the lower cabinet to the left of the sink in the Sacristy. Additional boxes are stored in the closet in the Sacristy.

During the service, the wine pitcher and bread plate are brought from the nave (Sanctuary west entry) to the altar along with the offering.

Homebound Communion: The leftover consecrated wine may be used by the lay ministers that take Communion to the homebound.

Set up for 8:15 service



Tips:

When wine level is low: Open the top of the box and remove the bag to get the last 1-2 cups of wine. Hold up the bag and use the spigot to dispense.

Opening a new box: Lay the box down so that the panel to open for the spigot faces up. Carefully push in the panel along the perforations, pull up the spigot, and fit it into the circle space. Fit the rest of the cardboard around the spigot, with cardboard sitting in the ridge just behind the spigot.

Set the wine box on the counter next to the sink. Hang the drip guard on the spigot.

Get the pewter pitcher with lid out of the lower cabinet to the right of the sink.

Check the Sacristy refrigerator for wine in the bottle marked "unconsecrated wine". If there is some, put that in the pitcher first. Then add the boxed wine to total 1 to 1 ½ cups of wine in the pitcher and put on the lid.

Rinse the wine bottle and stopper, drain, and replace in the Sacristy refrigerator.

Place the pitcher on the table in the nave (near Sanctuary rear west entry), along with the Communion bread.



Clean up from 8:15 service



Bring pitcher into Sacristy.

Check the Sacristy refrigerator for leftover wine from last week in the bottle marked “Consecrated wine – blessed in the Sanctuary”. If there is some, pour the wine from the bottle down the left side of the Sacristy sink.



Rinse out the bottle, then pour the new leftover wine from 8:15 service from the pitcher into the “Consecrated wine” bottle. A funnel helps with pouring. Store the bottle in the Sacristy refrigerator.

Wash and dry the pewter pitcher with lid.

Set up for 10:45 service

Put 1 to 1 ½ cups of wine from the wine box in the pitcher and put on the lid.

Place the pitcher on the table in the nave (near Sanctuary rear west entry), along with the Communion bread.

Clean up from 10:45 service

Bring pitcher into Sacristy. Get the bottle marked “Consecrated wine – blessed in the Sanctuary” out of the refrigerator. Add the leftover wine from the 10:45 service. Store in the Sacristy refrigerator. If the bottle is full, discard the remaining wine in the left sink.

Wash and dry the pitcher and lid. Store in the lower right cabinet, with the lid off to ensure the pitcher gets fully dry.

Individual Wine and Juice Cups

First Lutheran Church uses disposable cups to serve wine and grape juice. Cup trays are stored in the lower cabinet to the right of the sink in the Sacristy. A small wooden tray is used to serve the Communion assistants. Large round metal trays are used for serving at the rail. The cup trays are placed on the altar before the service.

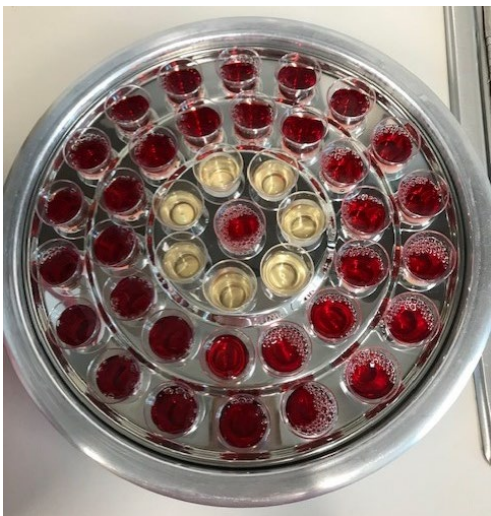
Grape juice is stored in the Sacristy refrigerator. Extra juice is located in the closet in the Sacristy.

The ushers bring the attendance count to the Sacristy after the sermon. During Communion, the Altar Guild person checks the attendance and cup counts on the yellow notebook to assess whether more cups will be needed. Backup trays are available in the Sacristy. If needed, use the walkway behind the altar to take more supplies to the altar during Communion so that the servers can reach them easily. Otherwise, monitor from the Sacristy doorway and hand supplies to servers as requested.

Set up for 8:15 service

Full tray = 40 servings

Half tray (every other space) = 20 servings



Backup tray = 10 servings



Get 4 round cup trays out of the cabinet.

Fill 2 trays completely with cups (80 total). Fill 6 cups in the center with juice, and fill the rest with wine.

Stack the 2 trays and top with the silver tray cover with cross on top. Place the trays on the altar, in front of the brass bookstand.



Fill

Prepare 2 more trays with 10 cups each, 2 juice and the rest wine. (20 total servings)

Write down numbers:

On the yellow legal pad on the Sacristy table, note how many cups (wine and juice) are on the altar and how many are available for back up.

Note: In the far right column, the ushers add the attendance count after the sermon so that those



covering altar guild during the service know at a glance whether more cups may be needed.

June 18	10:15	104 wine, 16 juice = 120 + backup	12	87
June 25	8:15	68 wine, 12 juice = 80 + backup	80	80
	10:15	92 wine, 18 juice = 110 + backup	110	112
July 2	8:15	82 wine, 18 juice = 98	98	58
	10:15	100 wine, 14 juice = 114	114	72
July 9	8:15	64 wine, 16 juice = 80	80	62
(Chin)	10:15	100 wine, 18 juice = 118	118	122
July 16	8:15	64 wine, 16 juice = 80	80	72
				72

Get a wooden tray out of the cabinet and add disposable cups. Fill 5 cups with wine and 2 with juice.

Place on the altar, next to the candlestick nearest the Sacristy (there is a placement guide located on the altar). This tray is also placed with the pew tray. Cover with a white cloth from the black linen cabinet.

Clean up from 8:15 service

Bring cup trays into Sacristy.

Trays that were taken to the Sanctuary - Discard all unused wine and juice down the left side of the sink. Discard the cups. Wash and dry the cup trays.

Trays that were NOT taken to the Sacristy - These can be used for the 10:45 service.

Set up for 10:45 service

Same as 8:15 for wooden tray. Use 5 round trays:

Fill 2 full trays (40 cups each) AND 2 trays with 20 cups each for the altar (120 servings total; use the same ratio of wine/juice as for 8:15). Note: If the 2 back up trays were not used for the 8:15 service, use them for the 10:45 service and add cups to equal 20 servings each.

Stack the 4 trays and top with the silver tray cover with cross on top. Place the trays on the altar, in front of the brass bookstand.

Fill 1 more tray with 10 servings (2 juice, 8 wine) as a back up, and leave covered on the Sacristy table.

On the yellow legal pad on the Sacristy table, note how many cups (wine and juice) are prepared for the 10:45 service.

<p>Clean up from 10:45 service</p>	<p>Bring cup trays into Sacristy.</p> <p>Trays that were taken to the Sanctuary - Discard all unused wine and juice down the left side of the sink.</p> <p>Trays that were NOT taken to the Sacristy – The wine can be stored in the “unconsecrated wine” bottle in the Sacristy refrigerator.</p> <p>Discard the juice – it has been out too long to safely return to the large grape juice bottle.</p> <p>Discard all cups. Wash and dry the trays, and store in the lower right cabinet.</p>
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Pew Communion Tray (the rover tray)

Communion assistants use a small tray to take Communion to worshippers who cannot come to the rail in the altar area. This tray has ramekins for gluten-free wafers, wine, and regular wafers.

The pew tray and a napkin are placed on the altar before the service.

Homebound Communion: The leftover consecrated regular wafers may be used by the lay ministers that take Communion to the homebound.

Set up for 8:15 service



Supplies


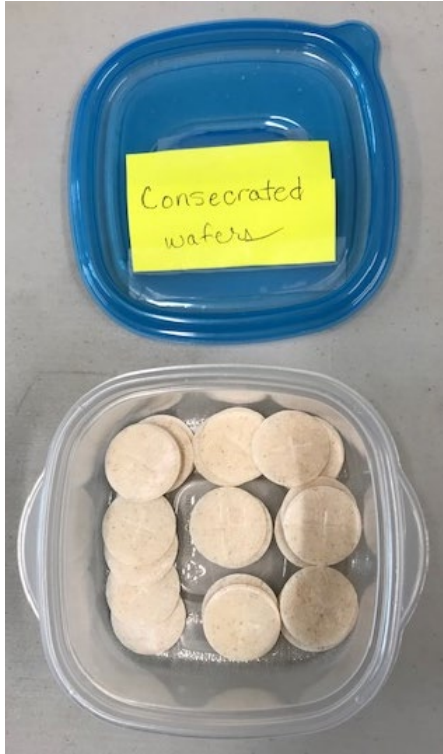
Get pew tray (wooden tray with 2 metal ramekins and 1 glass ramekin) out of the cabinet.

Get a purificator (white napkin) out of the black linen cabinet under the window.

Gluten-free wafers – Get gluten-free wafers out of the Sacristy refrigerator. Place 2 wafers in a metal ramekin on the side marked “gluten free.” Do this first to avoid cross-contamination with the regular wafers.

Wine – Fill the glass ramekin half full with wine.

Regular wafers – Get regular wafers out of the upper cabinet marked “wafers.” Place 5-7 wafers in the metal ramekin on the side that is not marked “gluten free.”

	<p>Altar placement</p> <p>Place the pew tray and purificator on the altar, next to the wooden cup tray (there is a placement guide on the altar). Cover all with a square white polyester cloth from the linen cabinet.</p>
<p>Clean up from 8:15 service</p> 	<p>Bring pew tray into Sacristy.</p> <p>Gluten-free wafers – Discard outside door 1 (behind the altar).</p> <p>Wine – Discard the wine down the left side of the Sacristy sink.</p> <p>Regular wafers – Get the container marked “consecrated wafers” out of the Sacristy refrigerator. Add the leftover regular wafers, and return the container to the refrigerator.</p> <p>Wash and dry the ramekins (and the tray, if sticky). Reassemble the tray.</p>
<p>Set up for 10:45 service</p>	<p>Same as 8:15.</p>
<p>Clean up from 10:45 service</p>	<p>Same as 8:15.</p> <p>Store the pew tray in the lower right cabinet.</p>

Chalice for Altar

The chalice is prepared and placed on the altar before the service. The linens are used to prepare the altar and serve the bread. The pastor and assistant pour wine from the pitcher into the chalice for consecration, and each drinks from the chalice.

Set up for 8:15 service



Supplies

Get the following out of the lower right cabinet in the Sacristy: Chalice (no pouring spout), and a small pewter plate.

Get the following out of the black linens cabinet:

1 Corporal (square cotton cloth with cross),

2 Purificators (rectangle cotton cloths with cross),

Pall (square white card),

Veil (cloth square that matches the color of the altar cloth and banners),

Burse (folding V-shaped container that matches the veil)

Dress the chalice in this order:

Put the plate on top of the chalice.

Put the pall on top of the plate.

Drape the veil over the pall.

Place the 2 purificators in the burse, then put the corporal on top. Place the burse on top of the pall.

Place the chalice on the altar, centered on the cross in the altar cloth. Adjust the front of the veil that faces the Sanctuary so that the bottom edge brushes the top of the altar. Pull the bottom corners of the front of the veil out to the sides, so the veil forms a triangle shape as seen from the pews.





Clean up from 8:15 service	<p>Bring the chalice and linens into the Sacristy.</p> <p>Wipe down the altar.</p> <p>If any white linens are soiled, place them in the plastic container to soak.</p> <p><i>Note: If the veil or burse are soiled, do not soak. Spot clean if necessary with a small amount of water or OxiClean solution (test a hidden area first.)</i></p> <p>Wash and dry the chalice and plate.</p>
Set up for 10:45 service	Same as 8:15.
Clean up from 10:45 service	<p>Bring the chalice and linens into the Sacristy.</p> <p>Wipe down the altar.</p> <p>Place the pall, veil and burse back in the black linen cabinet.</p> <p>Place all white linens in the plastic container to soak.</p> <p>Wash and dry the chalice and plate, and store in the lower right cabinet.</p>

Baptismal font


First Lutheran Church places a copper pitcher with water at the baptismal font. The water is used at the beginning of the service to commemorate the Baptism of all worshippers, and for baptism ceremonies.

The pitcher is placed on a stool by the font before the service.

<p>Set up for 8:15 service</p> 	<p>Get the copper pitcher out of the cabinet in the Sacristy.</p> <p>Fill the pitcher about 1/3 full.</p> <p>Place on the stool near the font.</p> <p>Dust/wipe down the font and stool.</p>
<p>Clean up from 8:15 service</p> 	<p>Get a basin and sponge out of the lower left cabinet in the Sacristy. Get a dish towel out of the towel drawer.</p> <p>Use the sponge to remove the water from the font.</p> <p>Wipe up any spills on the font and stool.</p> <p>If the water is clean, replace in the pitcher.</p> <p>If the water is cloudy, discard it down the sink.</p>
<p>Set up for 10:45 service</p>	<p>Same as 8:15.</p>
<p>Clean up from 10:45 service</p>	<p>Use the sponge to remove the water from the font. Wipe up any spills on the font and stool.</p> <p>Discard the water down the sink.</p> <p>Dry the pitcher and store in the lower right cabinet. Put basin/sponge in dish drainer to dry.</p>


Baskets for Cups

Baskets are placed on small tables in each side aisle to collect cups as worshippers make their way back to pews after taking Communion.

Set up for 8:15 service 	<p>Get the baskets and clear small trash bags out of the cabinet in the Sacristy.</p> <p>Place each basket in a small trash bag, folding the open end of the bag under the basket.</p> <p>Place a paper towel in each basket.</p> <p>Place each basket on the small table in the side aisles.</p>
Clean up from 8:15 service	<p>Bring the baskets into the Sacristy.</p> <p>Discard the cups and napkins in the trash in the Sacristy. Replace the bag if it is messy, or wipe it out and place a fresh napkin in the basket.</p>
Set up for 10:45 service	<p>Same as 8:15.</p>
Clean up from 10:45 service	<p>Bring the baskets into the Sacristy.</p> <p>Discard the bags of cups in the trash in the Sacristy.</p> <p>Store the baskets in the lower right cabinet.</p>

Hand Sanitizer


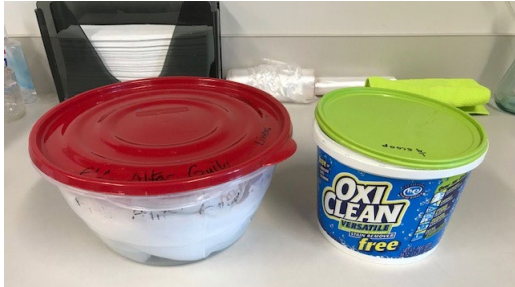
Bottles of hand sanitizer are placed on small tables at the front of the Sanctuary along the center aisle, for use by worshippers making their way to the rail for Communion.

<p>Set up for 8:15 service</p> 	<p>Bring the sanitizer bottles into the Sacristy.</p> <p>Under a bright light, check the level of sanitizer in the bottle. The easiest method is to take the pump mechanism out of the bottle and check the level on the pump tube.</p> <p>If the level is low, add more sanitizer and replace the pump.</p> <p>Check the pump to ensure that the opening is not clogged. If it is clogged, gently pull out the clog and clean the opening. Wipe down the outside of the bottle.</p> <p>Place the bottles back on the tables.</p>
<p>Clean up from 8:15 service</p>	<p>Wipe down the bottles and the tables, if needed.</p>
<p>Set up for 10:45 service</p>	<p>Same as 8:15.</p>
<p>Clean up from 10:45 service</p>	<p>Same as 8:15.</p>

Linen Storage and Care

Linens are used to cover Communion elements and to prepare the Communion table. The following are used:

- **Corporal** – White square cotton cloth, embroidered around the border and with a cross. This cloth is used on the altar to “set the table” for Communion. The chalice and the bread are placed on it during Communion.
- **Purificator** – White rectangular cotton cloth, embroidered with a cross. Used for serving bread during Communion. Also used with the pew tray.
- **Polyester squares** – White polyester cloths used to cover plates/trays.

<p>Set up for 8:15 service</p> 	<p>Get cloths out of the black linen cabinet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 Corporal for the burse - 2 Purificators for the burse - 1 Purificator for the pew tray - 1 Polyester square for the bread tray - 1 Polyester square for the altar to cover the pew tray and wooden cup tray
<p>Clean up from 8:15 service</p> 	<p>After the Communion pieces are brought back to the Sacristy, add cold water and stained cloths to the soaking container with a quarter-scoop of OxiClean.</p> <p><i>Note: If the veil or burse are soiled, do not soak. Spot clean if necessary with a small amount of water or OxiClean solution (test a hidden area first.)</i></p>
<p>Set up for 10:45 service</p>	<p>Same as 8:15.</p> <p>If cloths from the 8:15 service are unstained and unwrinkled, they can be used for the 10:45 service.</p> <p>Refold in thirds, and place with the appropriate Communion serving pieces (refer to other sections in the guide).</p>
<p>Clean up from 10:45 service</p>	<p>Place all linens in the soaking container.</p>

	Decide who is taking linens to launder. If not taking them, contact the monthly Altar Guild chair (see list on wall above sink). Laundry instructions follow, and also are affixed to the soaking container.
<p>Laundering instructions</p> <p>Soak soiled linens in OxiClean solution until stains disappear (this usually occurs pretty quickly).</p> <p>Wash in warm water with regular detergent.</p> <p>Check for stains and repeat soak/wash if necessary.</p> <p>Dry on delicate cycle, warm heat. Minimize wrinkles by removing from dryer when cycle ends.</p> <p>Press with an iron to remove dryer wrinkles.</p> <p>Fold each Communion cloth in thirds lengthwise, and then in thirds widthwise (follow creases on cloths). Result: A small square or rectangle approximately one-third the size of the open cloth.</p> <p>Dishcloths can be folded as you wish, as long as they will fit in the drawer in the Sacristy.</p> <p>Return the clean linens and soaking container/lid to the Sacristy. Store linens in the black cupboard by the window.</p> <p>Store dishcloths in cupboard drawer.</p> <p>Note: Clean linens and the soaking container can be returned the next Sunday, if it isn't convenient to return them to the church during the week.</p>	

Sacristy Sink Care (Why is there a covered sink?)

The Sacristy has two sinks:

- A regular sink that drains to the sewage system.
- A covered sink that drains directly to the ground. Known as a “sacrarium” (suh-crar-ee-um) or “piscina,” (pish-eena) this special sink was developed for the proper disposal of sacred elements. This sink allows the natural Communion elements to be returned to the earth in a more dignified manner than if they were drained into a holding tank or sewer.

Set up for each service



After completing the set up, rinse both sides of the sink.

Wipe down the cover of the piscina sink, and leave it open to let the basin dry. When the sink is dry, close the cover.

Clean up for each service



Wait until the service ends before running water into the sink.

If you must run water in the sink before the service ends, make sure the Sacristy door is closed. The sound carries into the Sacristy.

Ensure that the drain end of the dish drainer is over the open sink. This keeps water from pooling on the counter.

After completing the clean up, rinse both sides of the sink.

Wipe down the cover of the piscina sink, and leave it open to let the basin dry. When the sink is dry, close the cover.

Wipe down the counter, including the backsplash as sometimes wine droplets fly up onto the wall.

Altar Candles

There are two candlesticks on the altar that are lit for each service. In addition, the Christ candle is lit for festivals. The candles are actually liquid wax in cylinders.

The cylinders are stored in the Sacristy, on the shelf above the albs (white robes).

Note: Sometimes the candles are not snuffed after the service ends. If they remain burning when altar guild is cleaning up, please snuff the candles.

Set up for each service



Check the oil level in each candle. Grasp the neck of the oil cylinder and lift it out of the candle.

Check the oil level. If it is below the notch in the side (about an inch from the bottom), then replace the cylinder.

Get the box of candle cylinders down from the shelf above the robes. Get out new cylinders.



Remove the cap from the full cylinders and place on the old cylinders. Put the new cylinders in the candles. Store the old cylinders in the box so that the oil that is left in the bottom of each cylinder can be repurposed. Return the box to the shelf.

After each service

After the service, if the candles are still lit and no one has come to put them out, use the snuffer bell on the candle lighter to put out the candles.

Return the candle lighter to the hook on the wall in the Sacristy.

How do I sign up to help?

Two people are needed for each service. More may be needed for special services.

Please sign up as soon as possible when you are available to help. That lets everyone know when a service is covered or if help is needed.

There is an online signup on the church website: www.flclincoln.org

- Go to Resources > Helpful Documents > Sign up links, or
- Go to the Get Connected > Volunteer > Serve as a Worship Assistant.

A “how to” video and this handbook are available by going to Serve > Altar Guild.

Special Services

Extra help is needed throughout the year for special services, especially Christmas and Easter when extra services are added.

Watch the online signup for opportunities to help with these services.