

Acolyte Installation

This is a service that recognizes the ministry of the acolyte and installs new acolytes into this service ministry. It takes place during a regular worship setting. As the new persons come forward they are to be given a candle. The 'currently serving' acolytes will light the candles before the closing prayer. Candles can then be extinguished and the acolytes return to their seats.

(To the assembly) Dear Christian Friends,

Baptized into the priesthood of Christ, each of us is called to offer ourselves in service to the Lord of the Church in thanksgiving for what He has done and continues to do for us. As an assembly of believers, it is our privilege to recognize those who are engaged in the work of this congregation especially those who lead us in worship through the ministry of Acolyting.

The following persons have been instructed and have completed the training for Acolytes. We would ask that they come forward as their names are read.

(Names are read)

(To the acolytes) In your studies from the Holy Scriptures, you found that light has a special significance for the worshipers of God.

In the book of Genesis, God created the world and separated the light from the darkness to show his creation and glory.

In the book of Exodus, we find that God led His people through the wilderness to the promised land by a pillar of fire to light the way in the darkness.

In the gospel of John, Jesus said. "I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the Light of Life."

The light you will carry, the light around which we gather in worship, reminds us of the presence of God, a presence we can gather in ONLY because of the forgiveness we have received in Jesus Christ. It reminds us that we are followers of Christ, the light.

In the gospel of John (10:27), Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me, and I give them eternal life."

In the gospel of Mark (8:34), Jesus said. "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

All who claim Christ as their Lord are followers of Jesus Christ. For an acolyte that is the first and most important discipline you can do.

But an acolyte does more than just follow. An acolyte is a person who leads the congregation in their worship of God and helps the pastor in public worship

As an acolyte,
You will carry the light of Christ for us to see.
You will lead the procession as we come together to worship and give thanks to our Lord and God.
You will direct people in worship since you have learnt the names and items of our worship home, the symbols and sacraments, the messages of color and themes of our worship life.
But most importantly you will be bearers of the light for this congregation, the ones who remind us of the light of Christ, the light we follow:

Therefore, I ask you in the presence of this assembly, are you now willing to undertake this responsibility and role in this worshipping assembly? If so answer,

Yes, with the help of God.

And having offered yourselves in the acolyting ministry of this congregation, will you follow our Lord's example of humble service to others in this world, if so answer,

Yes, with the help of God.

(Candles are lit from the serving acolytes who take their lights from the altar candles.)

Receive then the light that leads our way as we gather together to worship our Lord. Bear it for us that we may see in your ministry the light of Christ our Lord.

Let us pray:

God of majesty and light, who has shown us the light of our hope, Jesus Christ, who has come into our dark world. Bless the ministry of those serving as acolytes who we recognize this day, that they may know the joy of your presence and may worship with us to the glory of your holy name.

For all the people of the church who offer themselves in your name, we give thanks, O God. Give them the joy of service in this special ministry and constant care and guidance as they carry out their duties. Help us all to be both willing servants and thankful recipients of ministry, that in our worship, your name maybe glorified, your people live in peace, and your will be done; through Jesus Christ our Lord we pray.

Amen

You may extinguish your candles and return to your seats.

This takes place after a six week course (adapted from a Methodist acolyte manual) in which we cover the sense of being followers of Christ, a discussion of worship, a

discussion of worship space (and visit of other worship architectures), a discussion on symbols and colors, the sacraments, and the church year, practice lighting and how acolytes assist in the worship (baptism, communion, and possibly helping in reading texts or carrying the Bible).

Pins are also presented to the acolytes (from Augsburg Fortress).