

**St. Martha's Episcopal Church**  
**COMMUNION ASSISTANTS GUIDE**

**(February, 2012)**

**Licensing:**

A **Worship Leader** is a lay person who regularly leads public worship under the direction of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.

A **Eucharistic Minister** is a lay person authorized to administer the Consecrated Elements at a Celebration of Holy Eucharist. A Eucharistic Minister should normally act under the direction of a Deacon, if any, or otherwise, the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.

A **Eucharistic Visitor** is a lay person authorized to take the Consecrated Elements in a timely manner following a Celebration of Holy Eucharist to members of the congregation who, by reason of illness or infirmity, were unable to be present at the Celebration. A Eucharistic Visitor should normally act under the direction of a Deacon, if any, or otherwise, the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.

**Scheduling:**

The schedule for all Lay assistants will be prepared in advance for two month sessions. Scheduling will be done randomly, unless Fran Hasson (for the 8am service) or Jim Moore (for the 10am service) is notified of your preference (in advance) due to a personal scheduling problem. After the schedule is set, each person is responsible for making their own arrangements for a substitute if they are unable to fulfill their assigned duty. A directory of phone numbers and/or email addresses is included on the back of the schedule. In an **emergency** please contact Jim Moore for coverage at the 10am or Fran Hasson at the 8am.

**Robes (Albs):**

Robes or Albs are kept in the Rector's office. Servers may vest there, if desired. If there is more than one Alb in your size, please feel free to check one out and maintain it for your personal use. Otherwise, the garments will need to remain at church to be shared.

**Preparing for the Service:**

1. Arrive early, at least 15 minutes prior to service time.
2. Light Altar candles at least 10 minutes before the Service starts – LIGHT THE RIGHT\_CANDLE FIRST and then the left.
  - a. At Baptisms and Easter. LIGHT THE PASCHAL CANDLE FIRST BEFORE LIGHTING THE ALTAR CANDLES preferably 10 min. prior to the Altar candles.
  - b. During Advent, Light Advent Candles after lighting the altar candles (add one each Sunday). There are three purple candles, one rose candle and one white candle. The rose candle is for Advent 3, and the white candle is for Christmas.
3. Be prepared to read both readings and the psalm.
4. At the 10am service, if the psalm is not sung, the 2<sup>nd</sup> READER will lead the psalm standing at the lectern. (Note: The psalm is regularly sung on the first Sunday of each month.) At the 8am service, the Acolyte/Server may read the psalm, if desired.

Announce that the psalm will be read responsively by half verse. However, psalm readers at either service may, on occasion, choose other formats at their discretion (i.e., by alternating verses, in unison, etc.). If you opt to do so, please announce your chosen format.

5. The Prayers of the People are usually read by a lay person from the congregation. However, If no one from the congregation stands to read them, the 2<sup>nd</sup> READER should read the prayers standing at the lectern.

### **Gospel:**

The ACOLYTE or SERVER will retrieve the cross after the second Reading at the 8am service or before the last stanza of the Sequence Hymn at the 10am service. Process ahead of the priest to the center aisle; stop approximately 5 or 6 rows down the aisle and turn to face the priest. After reading the Gospel, the priest will step aside for the ACOLYTE/SERVER to go back to replace the cross and return to his/her seat to hear the sermon and recite the creed.

### **Passing the Peace:**

After you have passed the "Peace" with others at the altar, you may go into the congregation to pass the "Peace". This is at your discretion. Please be sure to return to your place behind the altar before the priest is finished so that he/she is not waiting on you.

(Note: If there is a Baptism, AT THIS POINT, the ACOLYTE and/or SERVERS should move the Baptismal stand and shell to the side wall to the left of the credence table and move the round table and pitcher to the Sacristy.)

### **Offering / Preparing for the Eucharist:**

Following the passing of the "Peace" and the priest's welcome inviting all to receive the Eucharist, the SERVER should go to the credence table to obtain the two offering plates (alms basins). Enter the platform from the outside left toward the front center of the platform facing the congregation (Remain on the platform—DO NOT Step Down). Hand the plates to the Ushers. To make it easier for them, put your forefingers between the two plates to separate them. One Usher will give you a count to relay to the priest. If you are not given a count, quietly request it. The greeter(s) will then give you the bread (ciborium) and wine (cruet).

### **While the Offering is being taken up and as the Anthem is being sung:**

1. Place the bread (ciborium) and wine (cruet) on the altar and report the number to the priest. The priest will unveil the chalice and begin to prepare it.
2. Go to the credence table. Take the copper lined wafer bowl and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Chalice to the altar. (At the 8am service, take the 2<sup>nd</sup> Chalice only if there will be 2 chalicists). If asked, return to the credence table to bring the small crystal box containing the gluten free wafers to the altar. The priest will take the wafer bowl and place the needed number of wafers into it. Return the ciborium to the credence table.
3. While at the credence table, remove the stopper from the water cruet and place it on the credence table. Hold the water cruet by its neck and take it to the altar. Present the water cruet to the priest with the handle turned toward her/him.
4. Wait at the Altar while the priest pours the wine and water into the chalices. When directed, return both the water and wine cruets to the credence table.
5. Take the lavabo bowl and towel from the left side of the credence table. Drape the towel over your forearm and carry the bowl and water cruet (with the stopper removed) to the priest. When the priest

places her/his fingers over the bowl, pour a small amount of water over them. After he/she dries their hands, return the bowl, towel and water cruet to the credence table.

6. **As the Anthem is ending**, take the large plate from beneath the credence table. Return to center of the platform. Angle the plate vertically toward the congregation. When the singing of the doxology begins, the ushers will come forward to present the offerings. Receive the collection plates into the large plate and take them to the priest for the blessing. After blessing the offerings, the priest will then place them on the right side of the altar.

### **Posture during Confession and Eucharist:**

1. Servers and acolyte(s) may stand or kneel during the confession.
2. After the confession, servers and acolyte(s) should stand by the priest on the altar platform for the entire Eucharistic prayer. However, those who need to sit may do so.
3. Receive Communion. Chalice(s) should retain the chalice from which they received to administer to the communicants, using the words: "The blood of Christ- the cup of salvation". (See addendum below re: administering the cup) The chalice should be offered with the words "The blood of Christ, the cup of Salvation" said – even if the person is not receiving the wine. Finally, administer the cup to the priest reciting the same words.
4. At the end of Communion, chalicists may consume the remaining wine in their chalice. This is optional. Return the chalice to the priest or to the altar, as directed. The priest will re-veil the chalice and center it on the altar.

### **End of Service:**

**8:00** - Following the announcements and the blessing, take the snuffer and put out the altar candles. Snuff the left candle first, then the right. Return the snuffer, pick up the cross and lead the procession out.

**10:00** - Following the announcements and the blessing, take the snuffer and put out the candles. Snuff the left candle first, then the right. Return the snuffer, pick up the cross, and as the final hymn begins lead the procession out.

NOTE: At Baptisms, Christmas or Easter, AFTER RECESSING and after the congregation has recessed, return to the altar area to extinguish all remaining candles - i.e., Advent, Pascal, Baptismal or any special occasion candles.

If you feel so inclined, following the Service, move to the narthex or front steps and thank visitors for worshipping at St. Martha's, inviting them to return. One more smiling face and hand shake lets visitors know our hospitality is sincere.

### **ADDENDUM:**

**Administering the cup** with the words, "The blood of Christ--The cup of salvation".

If the communicant has consumed the wafer—Present the chalice close to the person's mouth. Allow the person to grasp the cup either by the sides or the base so they may take the cup to their lips and tilt it to their desired level. At the same time, the chalicist should maintain control of the cup by gently holding with

one hand the top of the stem as a pivot point just beneath the cup's bowl while placing the fingers of your other hand on its base to assist with the tilting. When they have finished, take the cup away from their mouth. Place the towel (purificator) draped over your index finger firmly on the rim of cup at the place where their lips were and rotate the cup about a quarter turn to wipe it. Proceed to the next person.

If the communicant is holding the wafer--They wish to receive by intinction, i.e. immersing the wafer into the wine. Lower the cup to just beneath chest level and hold it firmly as they dip the wafer into the cup. You may hold the towel in front of the cup to catch any drippings. Wipe the rim as needed with the intinction procedure. Proceed to the next person.

If the communicant has indicated they do not wish to receive the wine, i.e. crossing their arms over their chest, nodding negatively, etc., state the offering words, "The blood of Christ, the cup of Salvation" in any case.

Finally, be sure to allow extra time for smaller children, i.e. bending down to their level and holding the cup low enough so they may more easily access it.

Revised February 12, 2012, following the Lay assistants meeting held under the facilitation and guidance of Rev. Mary Allen, Rector, St. Martha's Episcopal Church.