Christ Church Episcopal

Altar Guild Functions

Policy: IX. B.
Initiated:
Revised:
Reviewed: 2022–09–18

As members of the Altar Guild, our primary responsibilities include assisting the priest in the administration of Mass and other special occasions (holy days, funerals, weddings, special services like Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, Christmas, Holy Week, Lent, Easter, Baptisms, Confirmations, etc.). This includes setting up the altar and setting out the appropriate vestments.

Other responsibilities include setting out Sunday (and other service) bulletins, making sure all oil candles are filled, all votive candles are replaced if needed, all wax candles are stocked, taking care of the paschal candle, making sure that the baptismal font and all holy water stoops are filled with holy water, preparing water to be blessed when needed, keeping fair linens and other materials (purificators, corporals, lavabo towels) pertaining to the altar and the shrines clean, and making sure vestments are regularly laundered and in good repair.

We also make sure that our supply of incense and charcoal is available and ready to use and that there is plenty of wine and altar bread in stock. We change the presence candle in the sanctuary every week. The members of the altar guild also engage in light cleaning of the sanctuary, sacristies, nave, and narthex as well as all items associated with administration of the Mass (washing cruets, chalices, patens). We typically check to make sure the building is secure before and after services (locked doors, etc.). Altar guild members also make sure supplies of candles and other seasonal items are stored safely and put out during the appropriate times (antependia, advent wreathes, palms, ashes, foot washing bowls and pitchers, etc.).

Additionally, we keep the hymn boards up-to-date for each Sunday (and at other services as needed). We are flexible and we are in constant contact with the Priest to assist them in preparing for any special accommodations that reside outside of a typical service.