

Assisting Minister

Responsibilities

- Prepare the Prayers of the Church for the coming Sunday, to be reviewed in advance by the pastors
- Read the prayers and selected parts of the liturgy at your assigned service
- Distribute wine/grape juice during communion; or bread if one pastor is presiding and preaching
- Help clear the communion table

Details

Prepare the Prayers of the Church

You will receive an email from the office in the week before your service date; it will include:

- the lessons that will be used
- a list of the sick and hospitalized
- those who have died and those married, born or baptized
- special events like Boy Scout Sunday or a youth retreat, etc.
- prayer petitions from "Sundays and Seasons"
- You may also receive a draft of the service including the prayer of the day and the hymns. In the bulletin, the role of the assisting minister should be noted with an A. (C indicates the congregation and P indicates the presiding pastor.)

The Prayers of the Church are prayers of the people. It is a series of short petitions followed by "God of mercy" (or whatever is in the bulletin and "Sundays and Seasons") to which the congregation responds "Hear our prayer." You can use, delete, or adapt the petitions from "Sundays and Seasons" or draft your own petitions. If you are looking for ideas for prayers you might consider the prayer petitions in the front of the ELW, or phrases or themes from the lessons and hymns for the service. If you use the petitions from "Sundays and Seasons," you may still need to add petitions for special events; e.g., weather disasters, MLK, Jr celebration, elections, etc. Remember it can be better for those praying along silently to have fewer petitions; keep your petitions succinct (you may want to keep younger members in mind regarding this!)

You should include several petitions calling out the names of the sick and hospitalized, those who have died, married, been born, or baptized..

One petition may include those in global mission. You can pray for them as a group or list by name: Brian and Christine Palmer in Liberia, Utpal and Stacy Saha in Bangladesh, Source of Life Ministry in Haiti, and the Emmaus Ministry in India.

Some of the other ministries that St. James is involved in are the Gettysburg Soup Kitchen, Gettysburg C.A.R.E.S, Ruth's Harvest, Habitat for Humanity, the Rescue Mission,

SpiriTrust Lutheran, SCCAP, and the St James Early Learning Center. The work of the seminary and the invitation to consider God's call is also a worthwhile petition.

The general form of the Prayers of the church is:

1. Pray for the church (the whole Christian church, as well as the ELCA) and our congregation. You may want to include specific church leaders, including lay leaders.
2. Pray for the world, which can refer to the natural world and the human structure of the world—leaders, governments.
3. Pray for those in need.
4. Additional need petitions as noted above, including marriages, baptisms, confirmation, youth events, Sunday school, etc.
5. Pray for the Saints— those who have gone before us—and for their witness. This is where to include names of those who have died and their families and friends.

Remember that we cannot pray for everything every week. Let the spirit guide you.

Make sure to say Amen at the end of the prayer instead of waiting for the congregation to do so; it isn't always clear when the concluding petition is finished.

The prayers need to be in the church office on Friday. You can email them directly to the pastor/s and church administrator. Their email addresses will be noted in the email you receive at the beginning of the week. Your prayers may be used for the Saturday evening service so be sure to email them.

Sunday morning preparation

Assisting minister robes are in the alcove outside the Pastor's office or in the coat area across from the offices.

Meet the pastor/s in the office for a prayer.

A microphone will be provided by the pastor. (You may want to wear something with pockets.)

If any names need to be changed or added in the prayers there will be a note on the reception desk.

You may want to get a bulletin and highlight your parts and places where you need to do something.

During the service

When **entering the nave**, you lead and go to the front, face the altar and bow your head (reverence the cross). Then you can sit down in the front pew.

When at the altar, turn your mic on a second or two before you speak. Stand at the center of the altar when speaking; the presiding minister will move to the side. Say the assisting minister parts (speak up and more slowly than usual) and begin the congregation in their part but then let your voice fade back. You do not want to be the only voice heard, but you are still the leader and need to maintain the rhythm. **When finished, be sure to turn your mic off.**

Do not sing the congregation's part or talk to the presiding minister while at the altar. The 8:15 service is live streamed and the 10:45 service is often taped.

During the last verse of the hymn of the day, bring your prayers (or place your prayers on the altar before the service begins) and come to the altar around the left side (facing

the altar). After the prayers, make sure your mic is off.

During the passing of the peace, bring two chalices (the same size and without their covers), napkins, and three individual cups to the altar. Leave the white glass dish with the extra napkins and extra empty cups on the credence table. Place one chalice to the left of the service book and one to the right along with the napkins and the individual glasses. Also bring one plate and place it on the right at the front of the altar. Then you can go back to your seat for the offering.

If there is no acolyte, you should bring the offering plates to the front to hand to the ushers.

When the offering is brought forward, come forward with the presiding minister and the acolyte to receive the bread or wine and grape juice. With your back to the altar, stand on the right of the pastor. Turning and facing the altar, raise whichever element you have (lifting to God as part of the offering). Then proceed around the altar and place the flagons (pitchers) behind the chalices with the wine on the left and grape juice on the right. You pour the wine and the grape juice during the singing of the Offertory. There is not a whole lot of time for this so keep moving but there is no need to appear rushed. You begin the Offertory Prayer with "Let us pray" and then begin the prayer which is prayed in unison by the congregation.

During the "Holy, Holy, Holy" please bow your head for the first verse. You may make the sign of the cross if you choose.

Communion

Generally you will distribute either the wine or the grape juice with the words, "The blood

of Christ, shed for you." Please don't turn away from the last communicant at a table until they have taken their wine or grape juice. Be prepared to take communion to someone who cannot come forward. After everyone has been communed, help remove all the communion items to the table behind the altar. The altar is not cleared until everyone has communed.

If you assist when one pastor is both presiding and preaching, then you will distribute bread to the people with the words, "The body of Christ, given for you." Use the hand sanitizer which is on the credence table. You also bless the children who come forward but do not yet receive communion. (Please switch hands so you are not putting the same hand on a head that then tears off a piece of bread.) A simple "Bless you in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" is sufficient.

Following distribution of communion, and clearing the altar, be ready for the closing portions of worship. The pastor gives the blessing and you pray the prayer after communion (another "Let us pray") Then go to your seat for the sending hymn.

During the last verse of the sending hymn, go to the altar with the pastor/s, reverence the altar and give the dismissal from the back or one of the doors and then greet people as they leave (**be sure to turn your mic off after the dismissal**).