

Assisting Minister

Responsibilities

- Prepare the Prayers of the Church for the coming Sunday, to be shared in advance with 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 prepare and 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 one or more petitions calling out the names of the sick and hospitalized, those in need, those who have died, married, been born, or baptized and an opportunity for people to speak additional names.

One petition may include those in global mission. You can pray for them as a group or list by name: Source of Life Ministry in Haiti, the Konde Diocese in Tanzania, and Young Adult in Ministry Hannah Haussmann.

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, Concordia SpiriTrust Lutheran, SCCAP, and the St James Early Learning Center. The work of the United Lutheran 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- Evangelical Lutheran Church In America) and our congregation. You may want to include specific church leaders including naming pastors and bishops (current Lower Susquehanna bishop is Steve Herr, current ELCA bishop is Yehiel Curry), including lay leaders.
2. Pray for the world, which can refer to the natural world/creation and the human structure of the world—leaders, governments. You may also include current needs around the USA or world such as floods, earthquakes, fires, etc.
3. Pray for those in need.
4. Additional 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. 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. You can tag one of them for your use.

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 the alb you choose doesn't have a pocket.)

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

You should review the bulletin before the service and may want to highlight your parts and places where you need to do something.

During the service

When **entering the Nave**³ 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 several seconds 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 for the offering prayer. You can 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.**

The 8:15 service is live streamed and the 10:45 service is often taped.

Prayer of the Day/ Bible Readings

The Prayer of the Day (following the greeting) is generally read by a child or youth. If the pastor knows that the assigned person isn't present, or no one is assigned, they will let you know if you need to read that prayer. Go to the Ambo⁶ and read the prayer in the bulletin. Be sure to start with Let us pray and say the Amen at the end.

If the person assigned as lay reader for one of the lessons is not there or doesn't go up, the Assisting Minister goes up and reads the lesson. Note: Do not turn on your mic for either of these readings, as the ambo mic will be turned on and it can interfere.

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 chalices² without their covers, napkins, and extra bread plate 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. Also bring one plate and place it at the front of the altar. Then you can go back to your seat for the offering. The pastor often assists with this.

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 (acolyte between you and 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 flagons¹ behind the chalices with the wine on the left towards the pastor and grape juice on the right. The pastor pours the wine and you pour 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 need to then turn on your mic, or you may want to turn it on before you receive the elements so you don't delay while you reach for it. 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." If someone has forgotten to bring up a cup, there are extras on the white plate on the credence table⁵. Please don't turn away from the last communicant at a table until they have taken their wine or grape juice. Be prepared to accompany the pastor 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 or at the pews. 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. If someone has forgotten to bring up a cup, there are extras on the white plate on the credence table

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**).

¹-The **flagons** are pitchers.

²- The **chalice** is a large, decorative drinking cup or goblet.

³-**Nave** is the main, central worship space of a church.

⁵- The **credence table** is the table on the wall behind the altar.

⁶- The **Ambo**- the reading desk