

St. Peter Lutheran Church of Upper Allen Township
130 Nittany Drive
Mechanicsburg PA 17055
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Altar Guild Guidelines Manual

Altar Preparation *(Diagrams and folding instructions in appendix)*

1. Liturgical Color for the day – see calendar.
 - a. Altar parament
 - b. Pulpit paraments
 - c. Burse & Veil

2. Candles and Candle Lighters
 - a. Check liquid fuel in altar candles
 - b. Check wicks for candlelighters
 - c. Place lighter on table in back of sanctuary

3. Prepare Altar
 - a. Paraments in place
 - b. Fair linen centered on altar over altar parament
 - c. Plastic sheets (3) in center and on left/right of altar
 - d. Missal stand with Missal/Altar Book left of altar center
 - e. Corporal (linen) center of altar on plastic
 - f. Chalice centered on corporal
 - g. Purificator partially folded and draped over chalice
 - h. Paten on purificator over chalice
 - i. Pall on paten
 - j. Veil draped over pall
 - k. Burse placed on veil, open end toward cross on wall
 - l. Purificators (3) to right of chalice assembly
 - m. Disposable communion cups (4) placed at base of Missal stand
 - n. Place flowers/liners in vases (2) on altar

4. Prepare Credence Table (next to organ)
 - a. Corporal (linen) centered on table
 - b. Chalice centered on corporal
 - c. Ciborium left of center near organ on corporal
 - d. Wine flagon right of center near organ on corporal

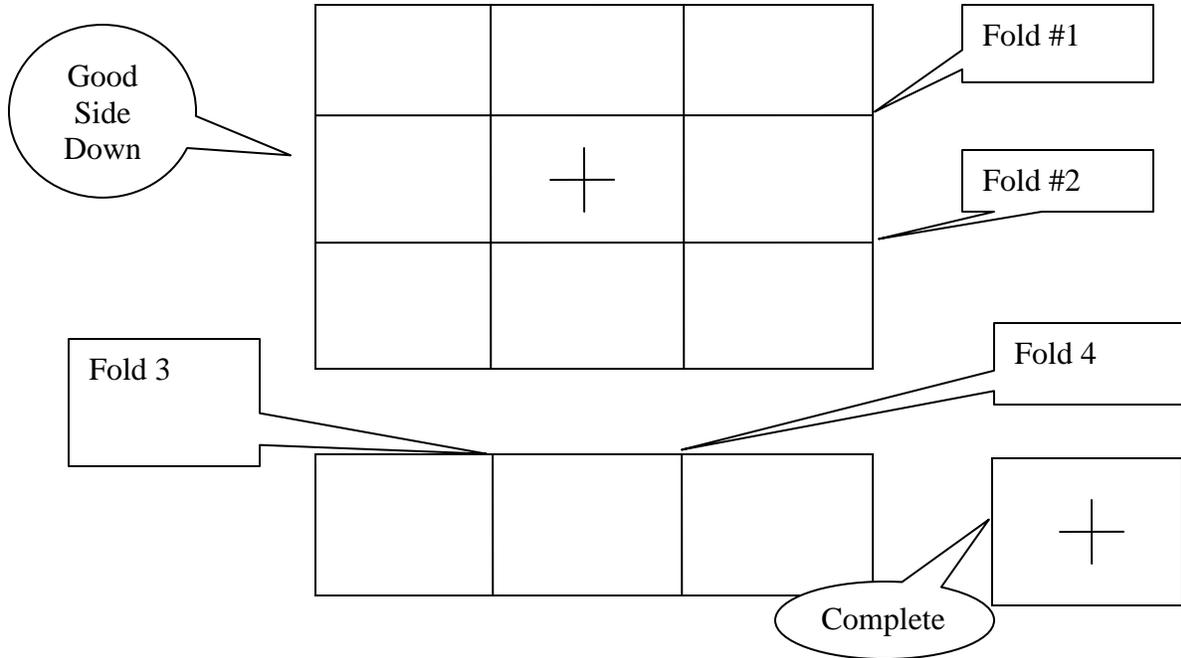
5. Prepare Credence Table (in front of pew screen)
 - a. Corporal (linen) centered on table
 - b. Cup trays (4) stacked on corporal
 - c. Cup trays (2) empty on top of stacked trays

6. Table (back of sanctuary)
 - a. Bread on large paten, covered with linen (Placed prior to worship)
 - b. Wine in cruet (placed prior to worship)
7. Hymn Boards
 - a. Locate hymns in bulletin and place numbers on two hymn boards.
 - b. Leave blank space on hymn boards for hymns inserted in bulletin.
 - c. Box containing hymn numbers is located under pastor's chair next to flag.
8. Banners – display as appropriate for season

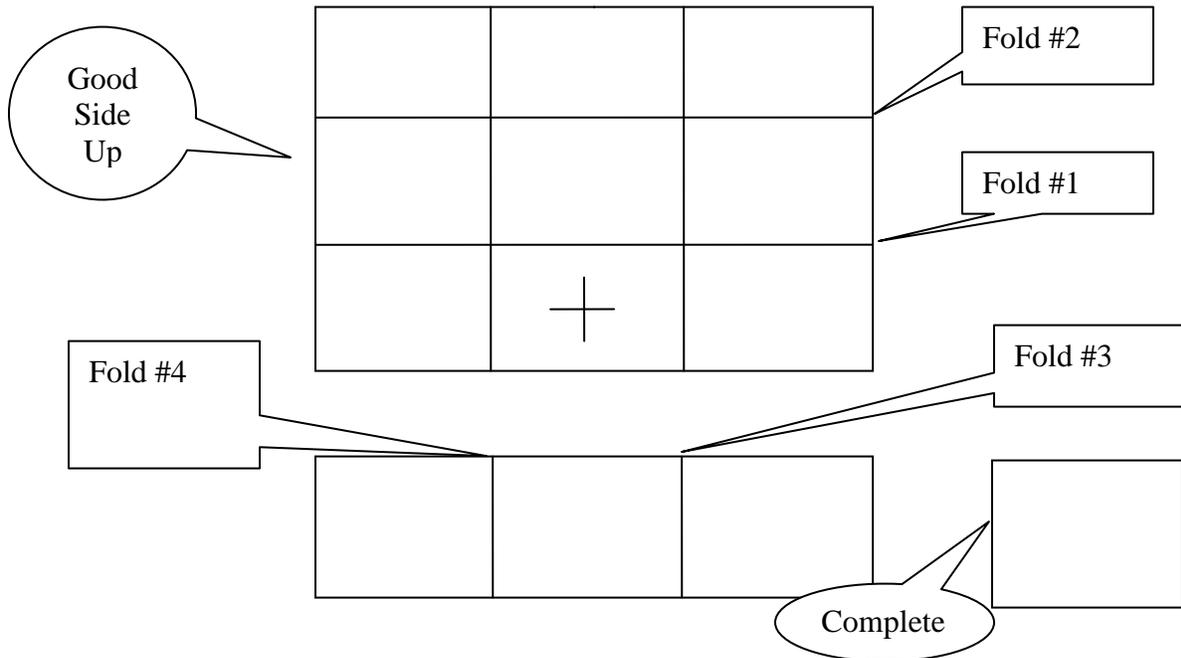
Altar Clean-up

1. Following early worship
 - a. Remove and clean chalices (2)
 - b. Remove, replenish, return cup trays (?) as instructed above
 - c. Replenish wine in flagon and cruet
 - d. Add bread to large paten
 - e. Check supply of hosts on credence table shelf
 - f. Vacuum altar rail area as needed
 - g. Prepare altar and tables as instructed above
2. Following late worship
 - a. Remove and clean chalices (pour wine on ground)
 - b. Remove and clean patens (scatter bread in Memorial Garden)
 - c. Remove and clean wine cruet
 - d. Return wine flagon to refrigerator
 - e. Remove and clean cup trays
 - f. Remove and clean linens
 - g. Return burse and veil to storage
 - h. Remove altar flowers from vases, wrap in tissue, and place in board room
 - i. Vacuum altar area and altar rail area
 - j. Turn off ceiling fans
 - k. Turn off coffee maker in board room
 - l. Turn off altar area lights (switches 14 & 16 in hallway box)
 - m. Turn off ceiling lights in sanctuary

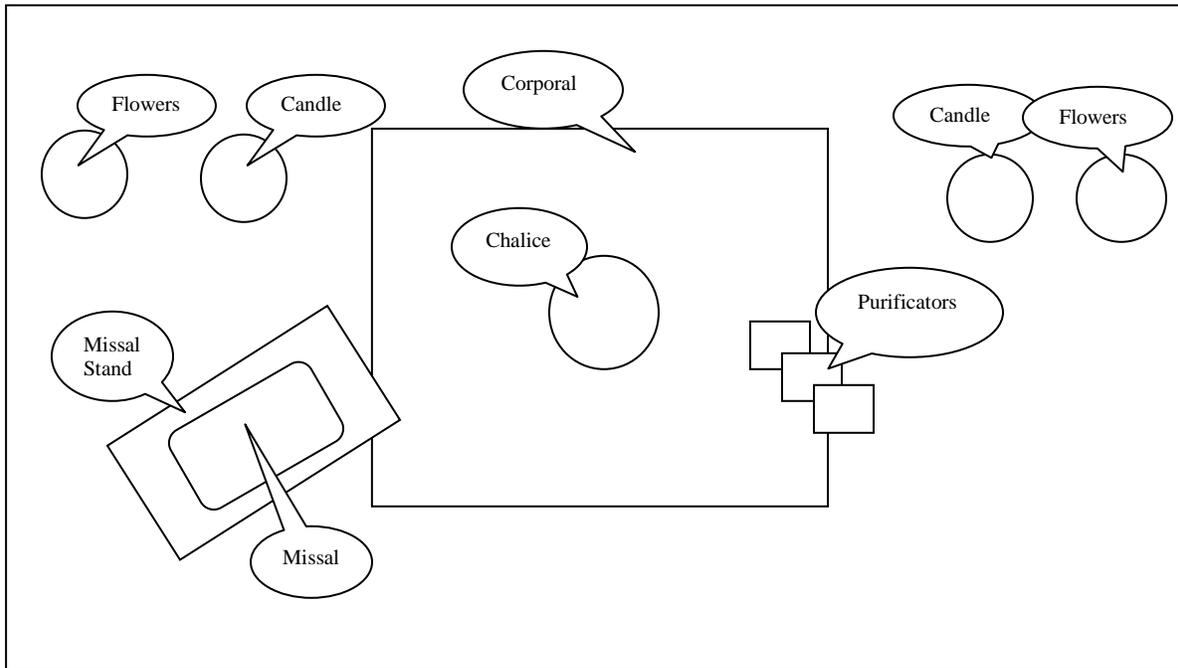
Diagram Appendix
Care of Linens
Purificator



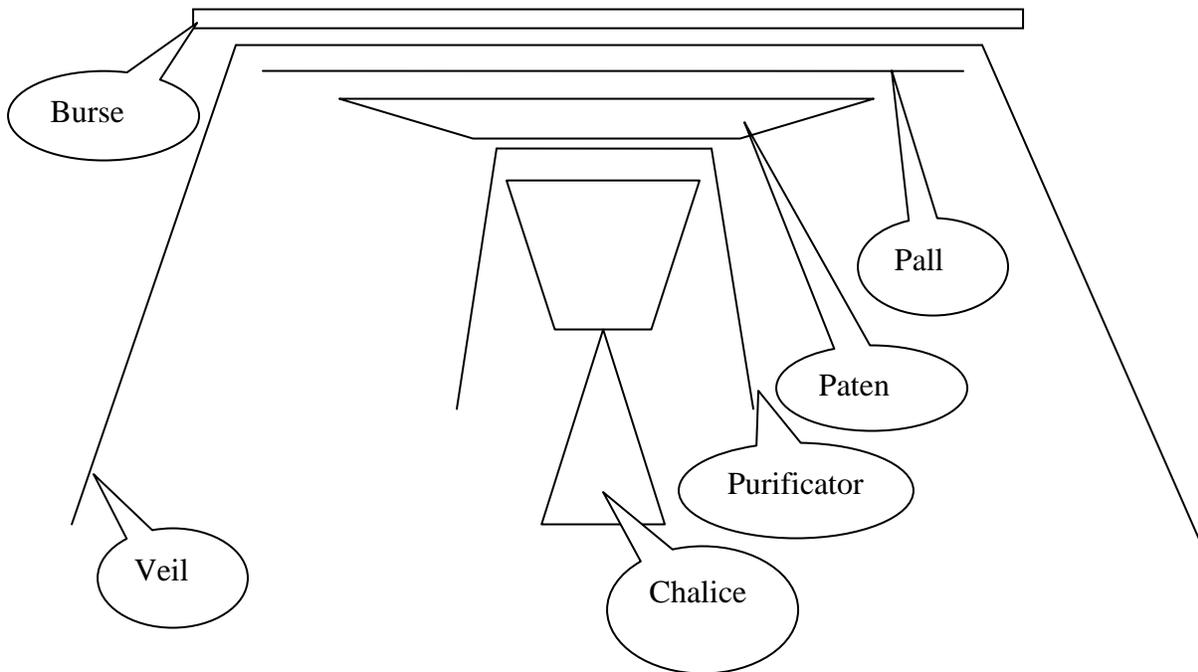
Corporal



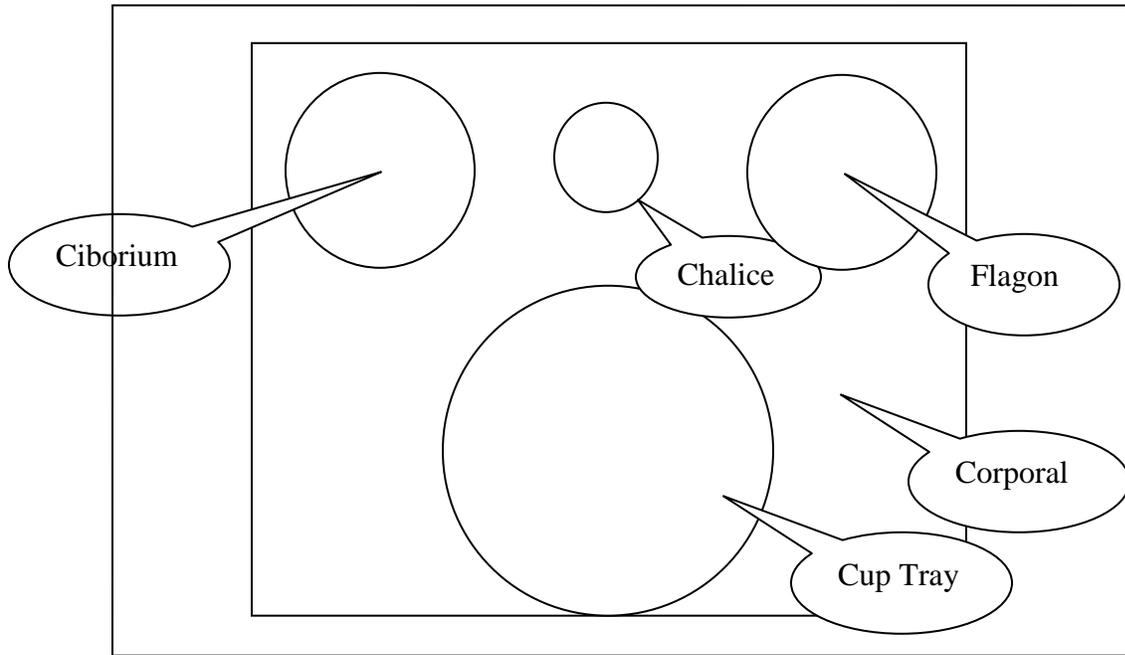
Altar Configuration



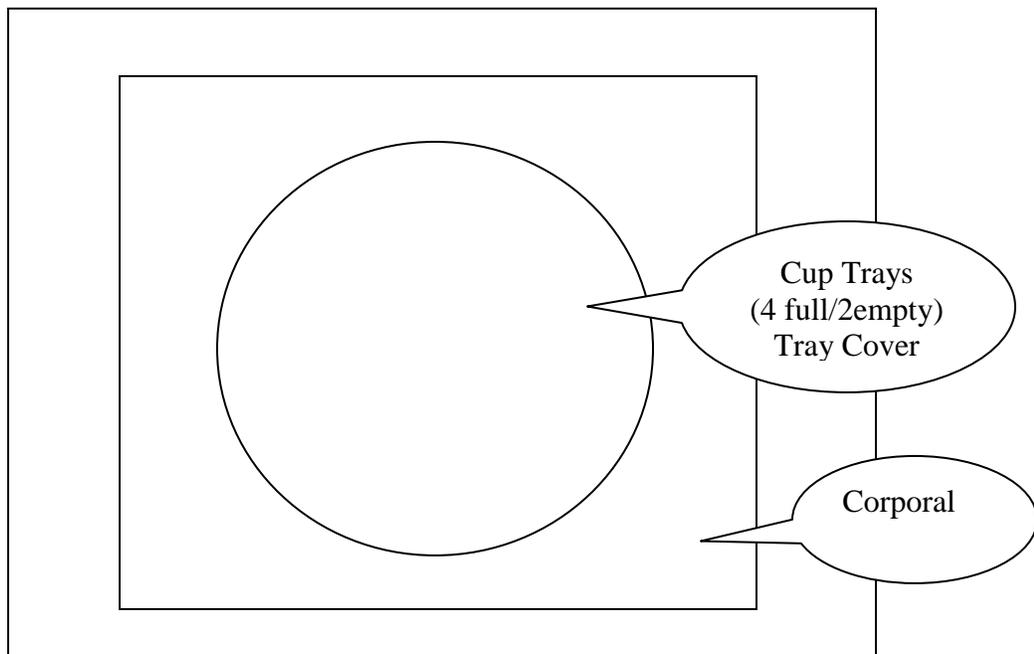
Chalice Configuration



Credence Table (Organ)



Credence Table (Pew Screen)



Cleaning Linens

(from *Altar Guild and Sacristy Handbook* by S. Anita Stauffer)

Ecclesiastical linens (Whether made of 100% linen fibers or not) should not be sent to commercial cleaners. They should be laundered in separate loads in a washing machine's gentle cycle, or by hand. A mild unscented soap is used. Fabric softeners are not advised. Bleach, bleach substitutes, blueing, and starch *must be avoided*, since they are likely to damage any of the fabrics. Read the detergent labels carefully. Several rinses are helpful, and a small amount of white vinegar in the final rinse cycle will help remove soap and minerals in the water.

Blended-fabric "linens" and "wash-and-wear" albs, which are either polyester or made of blended fabrics, should be drip-dried after laundering, and then pressed while still quite damp. All linen or blended linen should not be machine-dried, as this breaks the natural fibers, thus shortening the life of the fabric.

The sooner stains are treated, the easier they are to remove. Lipstick stains on purificators and wine stains on various linens or on albs can usually be removed by carefully rubbing mild liquid detergent on the stain; repeating the procedure if necessary. For more stubborn wine stains, sprinkle with table salt, and pour boiling water through them until the stains disappear. Be aware, however, that many times the wine stains cannot be removed; this is one reason why white wine may be preferred for sacramental use.

Blood stains should be soaked in cold water and then laundered. Diluted ammonia will help remove dried blood stains from fabric.

Wax drippings may be removed by scraping with a blunt instrument such as the back of a knife. Then place a white blotter, absorbent brown wrapping paper, or white paper towels under the linen, and press over the spot from the reverse side of the wax drippings with a moderately hot iron until the wax is absorbed by the paper. Remove the residual stain with alcohol or lemon juice, and then launder the linen. Another possibility for wax drippings on linens is commercial liquid wax remover, usually manufactured by candle companies. These removers must be used quite gently, however, they work better for paraffin than for beeswax. Black wax spots can be prevented by keeping the candle extinguishers clean.

After laundering, linens should never be machine dried, nor should they be wrung, but rather rolled in towels to remove excess water; this works much better with linen fabric than with synthetic or blended fabrics (which should be drip-dried). Linen fabric items are most easily ironed while still quite damp, first on the wrong side and then the right side. It is important that they be perfectly dry before being rolled or folded for storage, or they will be uneven and rippled, and they could mildew. Folds are made by hand after pressing, not with the iron itself.

Fair linens, protector linens, and credence table linens are stored rolled on heavy tubes and wrapped in acid-free tissue paper. Other linens may be laid flat in clean drawers or folded.

Glossary

(from *Altar Guild and Sacristy Handbook* by S. Anita Stauffer)

Acolyte – From the Greek for “to follow”; a lay liturgical assistant (often but not necessarily a youth) who serves in such various roles as crucifer, torchbearer, bannerbearer, bookbearer, candlelighter, and server.

Advent Wreath – A wreath with four candles, used during the four weeks of Advent.

Alb – Full-length white vestment used in worship since the sixth century; usually worn with a cincture. Worn by presiding and assisting ministers, acolytes, choristers.

Alms Basin – Large plate or basket in which the small offering plates or baskets are received and carried in the offertory procession.

Altar – Table in the chancel used for the celebration of the Holy Communion. It is the central furnishing of the worship space.

Altar Rail – Railing enclosing the chancel at which people stand or kneel to receive Holy Communion.

Ambo – Another (more historic) name for the pulpit, reading desk, or lectern.

Antependium – Parament for pulpit and lectern.

Burse – Square fabric-covered case in which the communion linens are often carried to and from the altar.

Candlelighter – Long-handled device used to light and extinguish candles.

Cassock – Full-length black “undergarment” worn under surplice or cotta.

Censer – Vessel in which incense is burned; also called thurible.

Cerecloth – Traditionally, with stone altars, the first cloth placed on the mensa; and hence usually made of wax-treated linen.

Chalice – Cup used for the wine in the Holy Communion.

Chancel – Elevated area where altar and pulpit/ambo are located.

Chasuble – The principal vestment for the Holy Communion liturgy; worn like a poncho by the presiding minister over alb and stole.

Chrism – From the Greek for “Anointed One,” a title for Christ. Fragrant oil used for anointing in Holy Baptism.

Chrismon – Form the words “Christ monograms”; symbols of Christ often used to decorate Christmas trees.

Chrisom – White garment placed on a person after baptism as a symbol of being clothes in the righteousness and eternal life of Christ.

Ciborium – Tall covered vessel which holds wafers for the Holy Communion.

Cincture – Rope belt worn with an alb.

Corporal – Square white linen cloth placed on the center of the fair linen on the mensa, on which the Eucharistic vessels are placed for the celebration of Holy Communion.

Credence – Shelf or table at chancel wall which holds sacramental vessels and offering plates.

Crucifer – The lay assisting minister or senior acolyte who carries the processional cross or crucifix.

Cruet – Glass vessel containing wine for the Holy Communion, oil for anointing, or water for the lavabo.

Dossal – Fabric hanging behind and above traditional east-wall altar.

Elements – The earthly elements used in the celebration of the sacraments: Bread and wine in Holy Communion, and water in Holy Baptism.

Epistle Side – The right side of the altar as the congregation faces it.

Eucharist – From the Greek for “thanksgiving”; a name for the Holy Communion. The sacrament of Word, bread, and wine (in which the two earthly elements constitute the body and blood of our Lord) for which we give thanks, and through which we are nourished and strengthened in Christ’s name and sustained in baptismal unity in him.

Ewer – A pitcher used for carrying water to the baptismal font.

Fair Linen – Top white linen cloth covering the mensa of the altar and thus serving as the table cloth for the Lord’s Supper.

Fall – Old term sometimes used for paraments on altar, pulpit, and lectern.

Flagon – Pitcher-like vessel from which wine is poured into the chalice for the Holy Communion.

Font – From the Latin for “fountain”; the pool or basin which holds water for Holy Baptism.

Fraction – Ceremonial breaking of the bread in the Holy Communion liturgy.

Free-standing Altar – An altar which is not attached to the wall, and behind which the ministers stand (facing the congregation) for the celebration of Holy Communion.

Frontal – Parament which covers the entire front of the altar, from the top edge of the mensa down to the predella.

Frontlet – Narrow altar parament usually hung in pairs and extending only part way to the predella; not now commonly used.

Funeral Pall – Large white cloth cover placed on the coffin when brought into the nave for the burial liturgy. If an urn is used for ashes, a small white cloth is used to cover it.

Gospel Side – Left side of the altar as the congregation faces it.

Host – Wafer, made of unleaven bread, for the Holy Communion.

Host Box – Short, round, covered container which holds the supply of hosts for the Holy Communion. Also known as pyx.

Intinction – From the Latin for “to dip”; the practice of administering the Eucharistic elements by dipping the host into the wine; does not work well with whole bread.

Laudian Frontal – A type of frontal which entirely covers the top and all sides (to the floor) of a free-standing altar.

Lavabo Bowl – Bowl used for the act of cleansing the presiding minister’s hands (this act is known as the lavabo) in the Holy Communion or after the imposition of ashes or oil.

Lectern – Reading stand in the chancel from which the scripture readings may be proclaimed.

Lectionary – The appointed system of scripture readings for the days of the church year. Also refers to the book that contains these readings.

Lector – A lay assisting minister who reads the first and second readings from scripture in the Holy Communion liturgy, or the biblical readings in other rites.

Lenten Veil – Cloth used to cover crosses, sculpture, pictures, and other objects during Lent.

Linens – Refers to three groups of white linen cloths: altar linens (cerecloth, protector linen, and fair linen), communion linens (corporal, pall, purificators, and veil), and other linens (credence linen, offertory table linen, lavabo towel, and baptismal towel).

Liturgy – From the Greek for “the people’s work”; the prescribed worship service of the church.

Mensa – From the Latin for “table”; the top surface of the altar.

Missal – Altar service book.

Missal Stand – Stand or cushion on the altar on which the altar service book is placed during the Holy Communion liturgy.

Narthex – Entrance hall and gathering space of a church building which leads to the nave.

Nave – From the Latin for “ship”; the section of the church building between the narthex and the chancel, where the congregation assembles for worship.

New Fire – The fire kindled on Easter Eve, used to light the paschal candle for the Easter Vigil. Symbolic of Christ’s resurrected presence.

Offertory Table – A small table near the rear of the nave which holds the bread and wine prior to the offertory.

Ordinary – Those parts of the eucharistic liturgy which do not change from week to week.

Ossuary – Small container holding the remains after a cremation.

Pall – Linen-covered square placed over rim of the chalice. (See also funeral pall.)

Paraments – Cloth hangings of various seasonal liturgical colors used to adorn the altar and pulpit/ambo/lectern.

Paschal Candle – Large white candle carried in procession during the Easter Vigil, placed near the altar and lighted during the Easter season, symbolizing Christ’s resurrected presence. At other times of the year, it is placed near the front and lighted for Holy Baptism, and placed at the head of the coffin and lighted for the burial liturgy.

Paten – Plate used to hold bread or hosts during the Holy Communion liturgy.

Pectoral Cross – A cross on a chain, worn around the neck by a bishop.

Piscina – A special drain in the sacristy which goes directly into the ground, used for disposal of baptismal water and wine remaining in the chalice after Holy Communion.

Predella – Raised platform in the chancel on which the altar is placed.

Presiding Minister – The ordained pastor who presides at a worship service.

Prie-dieu – French term for “prayer desk”; used in the chancel for daily prayer services, confirmation, and weddings, as well as by ministers at other times when kneeling for prayer is desired.

Processional Cross – A cross or crucifix on a tall staff used to lead processions.

Propers – The varying portions of the Eucharistic liturgy which are appointed for each day (or season) of the church year; include the prayer of the day, psalm, readings, proper verse, proper offertory, and proper preface.

Protector Linen – White linen cloth placed on the mensa between the cerecloth and the fair linen, to which the parament may be attached.

Pulpit – Raised reading desk in the chancel from which the gospel is read and the sermon preached. See also ambo.

Purificator – Square linen napkin used to cleanse the rim of the chalice during the distribution of Holy Communion.

Pyx – See host box.

Reredos – Carved stone or wood panel behind and above an eastwall altar.

Responsive Prayer – Brief liturgical order of versicles and responses.

Retable – A step or shelf at the rear of the mensa of an eastwall altar, on which cross, candlesticks, and flowers are placed. Also known as a gradine.

Rite – The text and ceremonies of a liturgical worship service.

Rubric – From the Latin for “red”; a direction for the proper conduct of a worship service. Rubrics are usually printed in red.

Sacrament – A rite commanded by Christ that uses an earthly element with the word of God to convey God’s grace; Holy Baptism and Holy Communion.

Sacristy – A room used for storage and preparation of items needed in worship; also used for vesting before services.

Sanctuary – The section of the chancel which immediately surrounds the altar.

Sanctuary Lamp – A constantly burning candle sometimes suspended from the ceiling or mounted on the chancel wall; in Roman Catholic and some Episcopal churches, symbolizes the reserved sacrament.

Sedilia – Seats in the chancel for the worship leaders.

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Sign of the Cross – Gesture of tracing the outline of the cross with the hand, as a mark of belonging to Christ in Holy Baptism (during which it is first placed on one’s forehead).

Stole – Cloth band in liturgical color worn over the alb or surplice around a pastor’s neck and hanging to the knees. Signifies ordination and the yoke of obedience to Christ.

Stripping of the Altar – Ceremony at the conclusion of the Maundy Thursday liturgy, in which all appointments, linens, and paraments are removed from the altar and chancel in preparation for Good Friday.

Sunday of the Passion – The first day of Holy Week, also known as Palm Sunday. Commemorates both Christ’s triumphant entry into Jerusalem and his crucifixion.

Superfrontal – Short parament which hangs over the front of the mensa of an eastwall altar; now rarely used.

Surplice – White vestment worn over the cassock; used especially for daily prayer services.

Torch – Large candle on a staff carried in processions, often flanking the processional cross or gospel book.

Torchbearer – An acolyte who carries a processional torch.

Triduum – Latin for “three days”; the three sacred days from Maundy Thursday evening through Easter Evening, which together celebrate the unity of the paschal mystery of Christ’s death and resurrection.

Urn - See ossuary.

Veil – Cloth placed over sacramental vessels before and after the celebration of Holy Communion.

Vigil – A liturgical service on the eve of a festival, such as the Easter Vigil.

Colors

Black – Liturgical color for Ash Wednesday; symbolizes ashes, repentance, and humiliation.

Blue – Liturgical color for Advent; symbolizes hope.

Gold – Liturgical color for Easter Day, giving special prominence to this single most important festival of the year.

Green – Liturgical color for the non-festival seasons after Pentecost and Epiphany; symbolic of growth in the Christian way of life.

Purple – Liturgical color for Lent, symbolizing penitence. Also the alternate color for Advent, symbolizing the royal color of the coming King.

Red – Bright red liturgical color symbolic of the fire of the Holy Spirit. Used of the Day of Pentecost, Reformation Day, martyrs' days, and on major church occasions such as ordination, the dedication of a church building, church anniversaries, and synod/churchwide assemblies.

Scarlet – The deep red liturgical color used from the Sunday of the Passion (Palm Sunday) through Maundy Thursday. Symbolic of the blood of the passion of Christ.

White – Liturgical color used of festivals of Christ, the weeks of Christmas and Easter, the Holy Trinity, and certain saints' days. Symbolizes joy, gladness, purity, and the light of Christ.

Banner Use

Advent

1.

Prior to Advent Dinner/Carol Sing

1.

Epiphany

1.

Tuesday of Holy Week

1.

Easter Morning

1.

Pentecost

1.

Sundays after Pentecost

1.