



The Episcopal Church in Vermont

# Liturgical Ministries Profiles

A competency-based resource for lay liturgical ministers

The Commission on Ministry: Committee on Christian Formation  
Pentecost 2013

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## Introduction

In The Episcopal Church in Vermont, we use the term “baptismal ministry” to describe *our committed response to live out our baptismal promises within God's Creation so all may be aware that we are in communion with a living and sustaining God.*

Baptismal ministry is a concept that has emerged over the past 60+ years in the wider church. The call to full participatory lay ministry grew out of an increased understanding of the origins of the church and is reflected in the Baptismal Covenant. This concept holds up the importance and value of *both* lay *and* ordained ministry and is the fullest expression of our commitment to the baptismal promises, encompassing the ministries we have in our daily lives *and* the ministries we do in and on behalf of the church.

This resource, *Liturgical Ministry Profiles*, is meant to serve all congregations of the Episcopal Church in Vermont and is *a guide for lay persons in the clearly marked and named public ministries done within and on behalf of the church.* It is a revision of the 2006 resource.

We hope this new and up-dated resource will help inform about commonly accepted Episcopal liturgical practices as well as the titles, terms, and expectations for each ministry. In the context of our baptismal promises, each ministry profile has a description and a listing of specific responsibilities. The profiles are also competency-based, focusing on the knowledge, gifts, and attitudes needed to serve in each ministry. These competencies correlate to what is needed for on-going formation and assessment, both self-directed and with a supervising clergy person. We also include some resources to begin any study or formation.

While not exhaustive, the profiles here are a common starting point for clergy and lay ministers to discern, to begin, or to deepen a lay minister's calling to serve in a public way on behalf of the church.

Blessings,  
The Christian Formation Committee of the Commission on Ministry  
Pentecost 2013

*The Committee on Christian Formation provides oversight, support, and resources to congregations and individuals in  
The Episcopal Church in Vermont  
who are seeking to be transformed for ministry.*

*We do this by collaboration, communication, celebration, documentation, and reflection.*

Mission Statement of the Committee on Christian Formation, 2012

## Acolyte

*Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, and in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers?*

An Acolyte ministers as a server at the altar. This is an ancient ministry. In the early church, acolytes were assistants to the deacon in the world and somewhat later on their liturgical functions were added. Their service helps to keep the liturgy flowing smoothly, thus opening the way for worshipers to participate without distraction. Acolytes may also serve as torchbearers, and/or crucifers in procession, and they may carry the Gospel Book according to local custom.

This ministry does not require a license. Although it is often a ministry for children and adolescents, adults also participate, especially in larger congregations and cathedrals. Acolytes serve under the direction of a deacon, if any, sometimes in consultation with a vergier, or otherwise under the supervising presbyter.

### **PREPARATION:**

- Understands this as a ministry that allows “the meal to unfold gracefully.”
- Practices in order to serve and move with dignity and reverence in an unobtrusive way: reverencing the altar, carrying the torch and cross, wearing vestments, ringing the bell, handling the vessels and other liturgical objects.
- Learns the liturgies well and is familiar with using the *Book of Common Prayer*, hymnal(s), and service bulletin.
- Knows when and where to move, what liturgical objects need to be where, and knows the cues to what is happening.

### **PRESENTATION**

- Arrives at least 15 minutes before the service begins. If there are any special instructions about the service, the supervising ministers will instruct the acolyte(s).
- Lights the candles (usually about ten minutes before the service begins).
- Serves as a model of attentive and dignified worship during the Ministry of the Word and at all times during the liturgy.
- Knows her/his place in a Gospel procession, according to local custom: the procession may include a thurifer, two torches (held by Acolytes), plus the deacon and a person to hold the book (another Acolyte). A cross is not generally included in order to focus on the symbol of the Gospel book.
- Participates with the deacon, priest, and Eucharistic Minister (any or all) to work together to prepare the table (altar) and receive the people's gifts.
- Before the beginning of the Eucharistic Prayer, assists the presider in washing his/her hands, if such is the custom, using the lavabo and towel provided.
- Receives training from the overseeing deacon, vergier, or priest for special liturgies such as a Festival Eucharist, the Great Vigil of Easter, and Bishop's visitation.

- Is mindful and remembers that serving at the altar should be done with dignity and care in the simplest way possible so as not to distract the congregation. Consistent action aids this and helps prevent carelessness on the one hand and fussiness on the other.

### **ASSESSMENT AND ONGOING FORMATION**

- Desires to learn about the liturgies and to participate as ability and maturity allow.
- Listens and responds to modifications and improvements needed (gently and clearly stated to young people as soon as possible following a service.)
- Participates in this ministry in a reliable and consistent manner with attention to the schedule; has consistent support from parent(s) for this participation.
- Participates in regular training events to allow for practice of skills and to extend knowledge of liturgical practice.

### **COMPETENCIES**

- Expresses enthusiasm and interest in liturgy.
- Consistently attends worship services and is timely.
- Demonstrates openness to learning and development; open to feedback, re-direction, and instruction.
- Has maturity to present responsible and graceful presence.

### **SOME RESOURCES:**

Barthle, Donna H. *Acolyte Leader's Resource Guide*. Morehouse, 2003.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Parish Acolyte Guide*. Morehouse, 2003.

Gent, Barbara and Betty Sturges. *The New Altar Guild Book*. Morehouse Publishing, 1996, revised edition.

## Altar Guild

*Will you continue in the apostle's teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?*

Members who serve in the care of the altar and the sanctuary, known as the Altar Guild, are called to a nearly invisible servant ministry of setting the scene for corporate worship. They ensure that the things needful to worship are in place and that God is honored in the setting.

Members prepare and care for the vessels, linens, vestments, articles, and supplies for the Eucharist, weddings, burials, and other special services. Members may work on a rotating schedule, singly or in pairs in accordance with the local custom. They may also be responsible for the flowers when they are available for services. Members see that there are adequate supplies and articles needed for worship.

This ministry does not require a license but does require training and attention to detail.

### **PREPARATION:**

- Persons preparing to serve in this ministry are usually assigned to train with those who have had more experience or are trained by the priest.
- Set up the credence shelf with the appropriate vessels and elements according to the needs and customs of the particular parish and the particular liturgy.
- Set out the bread and wine for the oblationers to take forward at the Offertory. It may be the custom in some parishes for members to set out the bulletins.
- Vest the altar, pulpit, and lectern with the appropriate seasonal frontal and falls if used. Banners may be added according to the season.
- Set out the necessary vestments.
- Make sure that hymnals, prayer books, and service bulletins are available for the ministers.
- After the service, wash and dry the vessels, chalice, and paten. Pour used water in the piscine or on the ground.
- Put away all items in secure location.
- See that fresh linen for the next service is arranged. Cover the fair linen with the protector.
- Trim wax candles as needed or replenish oil candles.
- Launder the linens as necessary. Check vestments and take appropriate steps for care, cleanliness, and repair.
- Order candles, bread, wine and other expendable materials.
- Polish the metalware.

### **PRESENTATION:**

Altar Guild members arrive at least a half hour before the service begins or set up for the service during the week.

### **ASSESSMENT AND ONGOING FORMATION:**

- Members may meet together and / or with the priest for the purpose of dealing with any issues or questions that may arise.
- Participation in scheduled training and in the diocesan altar guild.

### **COMPETENCIES FOR THIS MINISTRY:**

- Exhibits a passion for liturgy and has interest in the details necessary to ensure a smooth flow of liturgy.
- Demonstrates an understanding of the liturgical seasons and various liturgies.
- Has knowledge of the vestments, vessels, linens and other articles needed.
- Demonstrates desire to participate in a ministry that has “behind the scenes” tasks such as laundering the linens; has knowledge of proper laundering care and folding, etc.

### **SOME RESOURCES:**

<http://www.nationalaltarguildassociation.org/> Lots of how to's and demonstration techniques.

Gent, Barbara and Betty Sturges. *The New Altar Guild Book*. Morehouse Publishing, 1996, revised edition.

Malloy, Patrick. *Celebrating the Eucharist: A Practical Ceremonial Guide for Clergy and Other Liturgical Ministers*. Church Publishing, Inc., 2007.

Taylor, B. Don. *The Complete Training Course for Altar Guilds*. Morehouse Publishing, 1993.

# Eucharistic Minister

*Will you continue in the apostle's teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?*

A Eucharistic Minister (formerly called “chalice bearer”) is a lay person authorized to administer the consecrated elements, both bread and wine, during the service of Holy Eucharist.

It is important to note the difference between this ministry of the Eucharistic *Minister* and that of the Eucharistic *Visitor*, a lay person authorized to take communion to members of the congregation who, by reason of illness or infirmity, were unable to be present at the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

Eucharistic Ministers are licensed by our bishop for ministry in their local congregation and may request to renew their licenses every three years.

## **PREPARATION:**

- Persons preparing to be Eucharistic Ministers receive training for this ministry from a deacon, a priest, or other leader exercising oversight of this ministry in a congregation.
- Arrives early for the service, at least 20 minutes in most congregations.
- Prays for the people serving at the altar and in the liturgy; prays for the gathered assembly/congregation who will receive the Eucharistic meal.
- “Fills in” to lead the Prayers of the People or read the lessons of the day, according to local custom, when others are not available.
- Receives the gifts and sets the table when no deacon is present, according to local custom.
- Knows the words of administration for the distribution of the Eucharistic bread and wine.
- Knows how to administer the Eucharistic bread or wafers and the wine (the mechanics), holding the paten, proper use of chalice and purificator.

## **PRESENTATION:**

- Vests in an alb or in dress appropriate to local custom.
- When at the altar during the liturgy, the Minister’s posture copies that of the presider.
- Receives the paten or chalice and purificator at the time of communion and administers to the individuals in the congregation; uses eye contact when administering.
- Follows the custom of the local congregation for the reverent disposal of unused bread/wafers and wine.
- Assists with the closing ablutions and in the post communion care of vessels according to local custom.

### **ASSESSMENT AND ONGOING FORMATION:**

- Participates in this ministry in a reliable and consistent manner with attention to the schedule.
- A Eucharistic Minister should meet with a deacon or priest for the purpose of dealing with any issues or questions that arise in the performance of her/his duties at the altar.
- Participates in group meetings with other Eucharistic Ministers for the purpose of reviewing and improving various parts of the ceremonial aspects of the liturgy, questions and answers, and developing a rota for the coming months.

### **COMPETENCIES FOR THIS MINISTRY:**

- Demonstrates reverence for the Eucharist and the people to whom they minister.
- Demonstrates growth in their understanding of the Eucharist and their commitment to the congregation.
- Faithful in their personal life, prayer, and worship; participates in worship services when not scheduled for specific ministerial duties.

### **SOME RESOURCES:**

Ely, Beth Wickenburg. *Cup of Salvation: A Manual for Eucharistic Ministers*. Morehouse, 2012.

Malloy, Patrick, *Celebrating the Eucharist: A Practical Ceremonial Guide for Clergy and Other Liturgical Ministers*. Church Publishing, 2007.

Nouwen, Henri. *With Burning Hearts. A Meditation on the Eucharistic Life*. Orbis Books, 2003.

## Eucharistic Visitor

*Will you continue in the apostle's teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers? Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?*

A Eucharistic Visitor represents the welcome and love of Jesus Christ to members of the congregation who are unable—due to illness or infirmity--to attend the regular Eucharist service. Through the elements of the Eucharist, as well as their own presence, the ministry of the Eucharistic Visitor is to extend the Eucharistic community to include these persons. They are supported, encouraged, and overseen by the local clergy person or the vestry.

It is important to note the difference between this ministry and that of the Eucharistic *Minister*, a lay person authorized to administer the consecrated elements, both bread and wine, during the service of Holy Eucharist.

Guidelines for use are found in *The Book of Occasional Services*, 230-31. Eucharistic Visitors are licensed by our bishop for ministry in their local congregations with possibility of renewal every three years.

### **PREPARATION:**

- Because Eucharistic Visitors exercise a one-to-one ministry, they must meet the following requirements:
  - satisfactorily completes a background review which will be carried out by the Bishop's Office;
  - satisfactorily completes education on prevention of sexual harassment and exploitation in pastoral relationships and training in prevention of child sexual abuse in church settings in accordance with the standards set by the Diocese of Vermont;
  - signs a Compliance Assurance Statement that testifies they have received and read the document and the Diocese of Vermont Policies and Procedures Relating to Sexual Misconduct.
- Demonstrates an understanding of The Episcopal Church's celebration of the Eucharist and the extension of the Eucharistic community to those who are not physically present with the gathered community.
- Understands and articulates this sacramental ministry as distinct from that of a pastoral care minister, counselor, caregiver, or priest.

### **PRESENTATION:**

- Coordinates Eucharistic visits with the clergyperson prior to the Sunday service so that elements for the visit may be consecrated.
- Prepares the communion kit, perhaps in coordination with the deacon; includes the collect of the day, readings, and other service material; gathers other material that the person to be visited may use or enjoy, helping to reinforce the connection to the community (announcement bulletin, newsletter, Sunday leaflet, greeting card from members, etc.).
- Participates in the Eucharistic service and is sent forth according to the guidelines and form described in *The Book of Occasional Services*.

### **ASSESSMENT and ONGOING FORMATION:**

- Meets occasionally with other Eucharistic Visitors (in congregation, diocese, region, Mission District) for ongoing formation, learning, and encouragement.
- Meets regularly with supervising clergyperson for oversight and support.
- Demonstrates appropriate boundaries and timely reporting to the supervising clergyperson about any question or concern.

### **COMPETENCIES:**

- Models a mature spiritual and prayer life as evidenced through church participation, articulation of importance of liturgy, and service to others.
- Demonstrates continued growth and enthusiasm for this ministry through appropriate sharing of experiences with others, deepening spiritual growth, and reminding the gathered community of their absent members.
- Prioritizes her/his self-care and spiritual care.

### **SOME RESOURCES:**

- Benson, Robert. *That We May Perfectly Love Thee: Preparing Our Hearts for the Eucharist*. Paraclete Press, 2002.
- Chittister, Joan. *Listen with the Heart: Sacred Moments in Everyday Life*. Sheed and Ward, 2003.
- Ely, Beth Wickenberg. *Manual for Eucharistic Visitors*. Church Publishing, 2005.
- Evans, Abigail Rian *Healing Liturgies for the Seasons of Life*. Westminster John Knox Press, 2004,

## Greeter or Usher

*Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?*

Greeters or Ushers minister through welcoming, greeting, and seating members and guests to the congregation at the time of a liturgy. The first person a guest meets upon entering is usually the Greeter/Usher. For members of a congregation, it is reassuring to see a familiar and friendly face. For newcomers and guests, a smile and a word of welcome will acknowledge the importance of their presence and may help them feel more comfortable. Greeters/Ushers may also serve in other capacities during the liturgy. This ministry does not require a license.

### **PREPARATION:**

- Arrives early for the service.
- Helps people feel welcome, especially newcomers and guests; helps provide an environment where people feel valued and cared for.
- Works at setting people at ease in unfamiliar surroundings.
- Has understanding of emergency procedures (fire, ambulance) and what to do in such circumstances.

### **PRESENTATION:**

- Places bulletins, large print material, and other liturgical resources in a convenient place near the entrance.
- Wears a name tag and encourages other parishioners to wear theirs, according to local custom.
- Introduces her/himself to attenders, greeting people by name and welcoming guests. Encourages visitors to sign guest book.
- Hands bulletin, prayer book, etc. to visitors and explains anything unusual that may be happening that day in the service (baptism, commissioning, etc). Care is taken not to overwhelm visitors with information.
- Makes particular effort to greet parents with children, and offers information about church school and nursery care (if applicable) and location of nearest restroom.
- Escorts guests to seats and introduces them to parishioners nearby.
- Counts the entire congregation, including all participants and any children and/or teachers elsewhere who will be present at Communion.
- Proceeds with offertory at the assigned time, per local customs; enlists others to assist.
- Guides the people to the table for communion if necessary and according to parish customs.
- Invites guests to coffee hour and shows them location or introduces them to parishioner to escort the visitors.
- Passes on contact information of guests to the priest, hospitality team, etc.
- After the service, collects and recycles stray papers, restores kneelers, restores books to proper locations, etc.

- Identifies barriers, issues of accessibility, and hospitality, and suggests changes to priest, hospitality team, etc.

### **ASSESSMENT AND ONGOING FORMATION:**

- Meets periodically with other greeters to share their experiences in this ministry.
- Meets annually with all greeters and overseeing person (priest, deacon) to discuss any changes and issues of hospitality and to make recommendations.

### **COMPETENCIES:**

- Presents a warm, welcoming and open attitude of hospitality to all.
- Participates in this ministry in a reliable and consistent manner with attention to the schedule.
- Demonstrates faithfulness in their personal life, prayer, and worship; participates in worship services when not scheduled for specific ministerial duties.

### **SOME RESOURCES:**

Gilbert, John. *The Ushers Book*. Abingdon, 2005.

Van Loon, Ralph. *The Ushers Handbook*. Augsburg, 1990.

## Intercessor

*Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship,  
and in the breaking of the bread, and the Prayers?*

The prayer of the Body of Christ, led by an intercessor, is our response to what we have heard and received from God. The congregation offers prayer for themselves as individuals and as a community and for the world, particularly in response to what has been proclaimed in the sermon.

Intercessions used in public worship, either in Eucharistic or Daily Office liturgies, should be according to a format found in the *Book of Common Prayer*, various supplemental texts that are available, and/or other resources. If printed intercessions are not used, extemporaneous prayers should be offered according to the pattern that includes prayers for the mission and ministry in the world, the local community, the parish, and for ourselves.

This ministry does not require a license; however, some congregations require that a person be approved by the supervising priest to serve in this ministry. Other customs include assigning people who have expressed interest in participating in this ministry or rotating the various parts of the intercessory prayers among the members of the congregation during each liturgy. As with all liturgical procedures, however, the priest is the final canonical authority in liturgical procedures appropriate to the congregation.

### **PREPARATION**

- Familiarizes her/himself with the congregational worship and choice/s for intercessions; familiarity with all intercessions in the *Book of Common Prayer* and diocesan/Anglican/World Council of Churches intercessions.
- Knows how and is comfortable using the sound system in the sanctuary (lectern microphone, lapel microphone, etc.) if there is one.
- Practices and prepares texts, especially reading aloud for pace and space.
- Knows where the intercessor usually stands (lectern, among people, the middle aisle, etc.)

### **PRESENTATION:**

- Has a clear, audible voice, and is comfortable praying aloud during the service.
- If the custom of the congregation allows, the Intercessor should be able to work into these outlines the day's concerns or even write a prayer following the prayer book outline mentioned above.

### **ASSESSMENT AND ONGOING FORMATION:**

- Finds a mentor to listen to intercessions and to make suggestions. A deacon, presbyter, or spiritual director/companion could take this role.
- Studies prayer as a part of an active personal, spiritual life.

**COMPETENCIES:**

- Demonstrates a comfortable presence in public worship.
- Ability to speak well, articulately, and with appropriate voice projection.
- Familiarity with forms for Prayers of the People and other patterns of public prayer, including spontaneous and bidding of others.

**SOME RESOURCES:**

The Anglican Communion Cycle of Prayer:

<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/acp/index.cfm>

Carter, Jr., Kenneth H. *"Pray for Me": The Power in Praying for Others*. Upper Room, 2011.

The Episcopal Church in Vermont (diocesan) Prayer Calendar:

<http://diovermont.org/PDFs/prayer-calendar/2014PrayerCalendar.pdf>

## **Preacher**

*Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?*

A Preacher proclaims the Word of God in ways that inspire people to follow Christ, brings them into relationship with God, and/or strengthens their relationship with God. Preachers are called forth in their congregation after a process of gifts discernment and identification. They are supported, encouraged, and overseen by the local clergy person or the vestry.

Preachers are licensed by our bishop for ministry in their local congregations. There is an important distinction of which to be aware. People do not need to be licensed as Preachers to offer a stewardship or other occasional reflection. The licensed ministry is meant for those who will with some regularity compose and deliver sermons in the course of the regular worship of a congregation. The licensing is upon the recommendation of the clergy person serving the congregation who will determine that the person being recommended possesses an appropriate level of competence for this ministry and is committed to continuing education, evaluation, and feedback. Licenses need to be renewed every three years.

### **PREPARATION:**

- Prepares and delivers original scriptural, topical and/or pastoral sermons.
- Understands and applies a model for interpreting text; has knowledge of and utilizes a variety of resources, commentaries, including on-line resources and tools, for interpreting Scripture.
- Constructs sermons/homilies based on interpretive insights so that they can be appropriated by people in their context
- Demonstrates an awareness of and engagement with contemporary issues.

### **PRESENTATION:**

- Has a clear, comfortable presence in front of a group; has an authentic voice and style.
- Challenges and encourages others in ways that fosters and/or strengthens their faith commitment.

### **ASSESSMENT and ONGOING FORMATION:**

- Intentionally seeks and participates in regular conversation with colleagues, team members, and/or other preachers to critique sermons.

- Meets regularly with other preachers (in diocese, region, Mission District) for ongoing formation, learning, and encouragement.
- Creates learning goals for each three-year license renewal and demonstrates development and growth in these goal areas.
- Demonstrates diligence in regularly studying scripture and interpretive materials.

### **COMPETENCIES:**

- Determines appropriate scriptures, following Revised Common Lectionary and local custom with guidance from priest.
- Understands and uses practices of prayer in daily life and in sermon preparation.
- Discerns themes of scriptures.
- Incorporates scholarship and commentaries into preparation.
- Describes how God is revealed in Scripture and how God is revealed today.
- Awareness of the variety of styles and traditions in preaching; active appreciation and passion for preaching.

### **SOME RESOURCES:**

Commentaries on the Revised Common Lectionary, the Anglican Church of Canada, Diocese of Quebec: <http://montreal.anglican.org/comments/index.shtml>

The Episcopal Church & Visual Arts Resources: <http://www.ecva.org/contents.htm>

The Liturgical Calendar and Resources, The Episcopal Church: <http://www.lectionarypage.net/>

The Revised Common Lectionary and Resources from Vanderbilt University: <http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/>

Sermons That Work, The Episcopal Church: <http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/stw/>

The Text This Week: <http://www.textweek.com/>

The Working Preacher: <https://www.workingpreacher.org/>

Brueggeman, Walter, *Inscribing the Text*, Augsburg Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 2004.

Guthrie, Clifton F. *From Pew to Pulpit: A Beginner's Guide to Preaching*, Abingdon Press, Nashville, 2005.

Schlafer, David J. *Your Way with God's Word: Discovering Your Distinctive Preaching Voice*, Cowley Publications, Cambridge, MA, 1990.

Taylor, Barbara Brown. *The Preaching Life*, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Lanham, MD, 1993.

# Thurifer

*Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship,  
and in the breaking of the bread, and in the Prayers?*

“Let your prayers rise as incense...” (*Book of Common Prayer*, 141). The use of incense in worship dates back to antiquity. Today a Thurifer carries incense in a thurible (censer suspended from chains) during processions and censings, or assists the priest in censings, the Gospel book, altar, officiants, and congregation. The Thurifer’s ministry is to handle the thurible and participate in censings as appropriate and customary.

This ministry of Thurifer is unique and is separate from the ministry of acolyte although acolytes may also serve as Thurifers. This ministry does not require a license but does require training. The Thurifer functions under the direction of a vergier, deacon and/or priest.

With the introduction of non-allergenic charcoal, more congregations are again using incense in worship services. This charcoal is readily available from church supply stores. People’s allergies and sensitivities should be considered in the use of incense.

## **PREPARATION:**

- Prepares the censer with burning charcoal and incense; familiar with the incense boat and how to use the elements.
- Handles a thurible correctly; has practiced both for manual technique and within liturgical space (at altar, at Gospel book, in the aisle, etc.) and while processing.
- Practices handing off thurible to priest; knows the liturgical cues and placement.

## **PRESENTATION:**

- Understands flow of the liturgy and when and where censings are needed; understands when thurible will be handed off and returned.
- Maintains use of the thurible that does not detract from overall liturgy and other elements.
- Safely uses thurible and safely extinguishes and disposes of charcoal following use.

## **ASSESSMENT AND ONGOING FORMATION:**

- Meets with a deacon/priest to pre-plan and afterwards to assess each service when use of incense is not a regular practice.
- Practices under supervision and with mentoring, the most important formation.

## **COMPETENCIES**

- Expresses enthusiasm and interest in liturgy.
- Consistently attends worship services and is timely.
- Demonstrates openness to learning and development; open to feedback, re-direction, and instruction.
- Has maturity to present responsible and graceful presence.

## **SOME RESOURCES:**

Barthle, Donna H. *Acolyte Leader's Resource Guide*. Morehouse, 2003.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Parish Acolyte Guide*. Morehouse, 2003.

A Thurifer training video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AY59IUggkrE>

Although Roman Catholic, this training video shows the basics of using a thurible and also how to interact when there are acolytes and a deacon present.

The Church of the Advent, Boston, offers a description of Thurifer:

<http://theadventboston.org/customry/positions/thurifer.htm>

Vergers in the Diocese of Texas offer a manual:

<http://www.texasvergers.org/CollectionofInformation/Customaries/thurifer.pdf>

## Worship Leader

*Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers? Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?*

Our chief corporate act is the public proclamation of relationship with God and each other in Christ. The Worship Leader facilitates a smooth and reverent liturgy so our communal relationship with God in Christ is enhanced and deepened, sending us forth into the world nourished and strengthened for service in God's name.

A Worship Leader serves to lead congregational worship along with ordained clergy or solo. A Worship Leader may lead the Word of God during the service of Holy Eucharist; a Leader may lead solo at Morning and Evening Prayer, Compline, Good Friday service, the Burial of the Dead, and liturgies for healing. Some Worship Leaders may also be licensed as Preachers.

Worship Leaders are licensed by our bishop upon the recommendation of the member of the clergy serving that congregation and with the knowledge of the Vestry. They may request to renew their licenses every three years and are supported, encouraged, and overseen by the local clergy person or the vestry.

### **PREPARATION:**

- Persons preparing to be a Worship Leader usually receive training for this ministry from a clergy person or from another licensed Worship Leader.
- Prepares the appropriate service outline: the collect; the lessons of the day; the prayers that are appropriate for the service, pertinent to the lessons, and address the needs and concerns of the congregation and the world.
- Should consult and work with the musician(s) to choose hymns.
- Prepares the worship materials and space necessary for the liturgy: for example, prayer and hymn books in the appropriate place(s), bulletins available, hymn numbers posted, slideshow and tech equipment ready.
- Arrives early for the service; ensures that scheduled participants are present and prepared or invites others to join the service as readers, gathering the offering, etc.

*Note: The above tasks will vary depending on the local congregation and their needs as well as liturgical customs.*

### **PRESENTATION:**

- Has a clear, comfortable presence in front of a group; has an authentic voice and style; and has knowledge of and respect for the local customs for worship, the *Book of Common Prayer*, as well as the variety of Episcopal forms of worship.
- May vest in an alb (or cassock and surplice) as is local custom.

### **ASSESSMENT and ONGOING FORMATION:**

- Intentionally seeks and participates in regular conversation with colleagues, team members, and/or other Worship Leaders to critique services.
- Meets regularly with other Worship Leaders (in diocese, region, Mission District) for ongoing formation, learning, and encouragement.
- Creates learning goals for each three-year license renewal and demonstrates development and growth in these goal areas.

### **COMPETENCIES:**

- Demonstrates respect for liturgical tradition as well as new expressions, valuing all services in their own right and not as secondary to Eucharist.
- Has a deep interest and on-going curiosity about liturgical traditions of the Church, styles of worship, and seasonal variations.
- Ability to discern liturgical need and culture of congregation to create service that is a good match; also demonstrates knowledge of and willingness to try new things.
- Balances attention to detail with larger context and perspective in liturgy.
- Believes liturgy is the “work of the people” and strives for hospitality, inclusivity, and participation.
- Demonstrates appropriate comportment and presider’s presence –grace, humor at times, solemnity, and respect; posture of invitation and solemn prayer, confidence of voice and presence; comfortable being “up front.”
- Ability to create and develop service that is liturgically and seasonally appropriate (Eastertide, Earth Day service, special themes, etc.) with integrated service components.

### **SOME RESOURCES:**

*Enriching Our Worship.* Supplemental texts of The Episcopal Church.

*Lesser Feasts and Fasts,* Church Publishing, 2006.

*Holy Women; Holy Men,* Church Publishing, 2010.

*The Book of Occasional Services,* Church Publishing, 2004.

Stuhlman, Byron. *Prayer Book Rubrics Expanded,* 1987.

Internet resources for worship leading:

[www.lectionarypage.net](http://www.lectionarypage.net) The Episcopal Church’s lectionary page and liturgical calendar

[www.textweek.com](http://www.textweek.com) clearing house of interdenominational resources

[www.faihandworship.com](http://www.faihandworship.com) an Anglican Celtic resource

[www.ministrymatters.com](http://www.ministrymatters.com) a United Methodist resource with ideas for Episcopalians

From *The New Church’s Teaching Series:*

Volume 1: *The Anglican Vision*

Volume 2: *Opening the Bible*

Volume 3: *Engaging the Word*

Volume 7: *Opening the Prayer Book*

Volume 12: *A Theology of Worship*