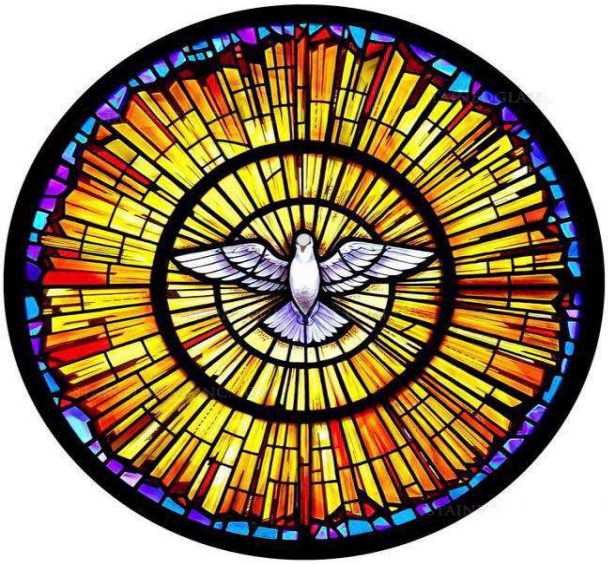


SERVANT GUIDEBOOK

CHRIST CHURCH BY THE SEA / IGLESIA CRISTO DEL MAR

Francisco Medina Ascencio Blvd. 2015

Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco, MX

2026 edition



THANK YOU!

If you are reading this, it's likely you're considering becoming, or have already agreed to become, a liturgical servant.

Lay servers are an integral part of worship services, especially in a small congregation such as Christ Church by the Sea.

We thank you for sharing your time and talent.

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

– 1 Peter 4:10

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Setting the Altar…… 1

- Banner Guide …… 3
- Liturgical calendar…….. 4
- Photos ……. 5

Greeter ……. 8

Crucifer & Altar Server……..... 9

Lector……... 11

Chalice Bearer…… 12

Offertory……. 14

SETTING THE ALTAR

Prior to start of service

At the altar:

- Consult the current year's Liturgical Color Calendar* to determine the appropriate colors for the paramets-- the colored strips which lay across the white altar cloth. Set the altar with the appropriate corresponding color(s).
- Consult the banner guide* to determine which banner to hang above/behind the altar. Note some banners also have a smaller coordinating banner which hangs above the cabinet to the right of the altar.
- Place the Gospel books and holder(s) to the presider's right, approximately halfway between the front and rear edge of the altar. The front of the books should face toward the congregation. Ensure the ribbon in each Gospel book is marking the day's assigned Gospel reading. Note Holy Days are typically located toward the rear of the book.
- Place the Altar book and holder to the presider's left. The book should face the presider. Usually, the first ribbon should be placed at the beginning of the Great Thanksgiving. Be sure to place subsequent ribbons at pages designating the season or Holy Day (e.g. Advent, Easter, Pentecost, Trinity Sunday)
- Light the altar candles
- Ensure the sanctuary lamp is lit. Replace the bulb as needed. (Note: turning off the breakers will not affect this lamp. Power feeds continuously to this lamp as well as the sockets for the floor fans.)
- Place the corporal cloth centered and near the rear edge of the altar; lay it open and flat.

---

*The Liturgical Color Calendar and Banner Guide are located at the end of this chapter.

At the credence table:

- Retrieve the chalices, paten (round metal plate), and stoneware host dish from inside the credence table. Also retrieve two palls (stiff cloth-covered squares), and one purificator (cloth).

- Retrieve the wine bottle, water cruet, and hosts (large and small) from inside the credence table.

- Place one (1) large host onto the paten. Place small hosts inside the stoneware dish and replace the cover. For low season, estimate 15-20 hosts and for high season, estimate 40-50. Note that a plastic airtight container may be kept inside the aumbry with reserved (previously-consecrated) hosts. If using only reserved hosts, notify the chalice bearer as this will affect where they ultimately place the dish on the altar.

- Pour wine into each chalice: the metal chalice should contain at least a 1.5”-2” depth of wine during low season and at least 3” during high season. Year-round, the stoneware chalice will only require ½”-3/4” depth.

- Add a drop of water to each chalice.
- Drape the metal chalice with a purificator. Then place the paten with the large host on top of the draped metal chalice and cover with a pall.

- Place a pall on top of the stoneware chalice.

- Suggested placement order on the credence table, from left to right: stoneware dish, stoneware chalice, and metal chalice. (This placement will enable the chalice bearer to easily transfer to the altar before the offertory.)

Additional tasks:

- Place a service bulletin on the seats of the presider, altar server, and any other assistants or visiting clergy who will be seated behind the altar.
- Turn on both floor fans and point them toward the seats behind the altar
- Notify the head of the Altar Guild if wine or host supplies start to run low.

After service ends:

- Extinguish the altar candles
- Remove all books and holders- store them on the shelves under the altar
- When removing the corporal, be sure to shake any crumbs outside in a planter area, not on cement. Re-fold the corporal and store it inside the credence table.
- Place any leftover small hosts in the sealed airtight storage container and store in the aumbry. Any crumbs in the stoneware dish or paten should be disposed of in the same manner as the corporal crumbs.
- Reverently drink any consecrated wine remaining in each chalice, or ask another congregant to do so. Rinse and wipe each chalice and store under the credence table.
- Store palls under the credence table.
- Make arrangements to launder the soiled purificator.
- Turn off the floor fans

BANNER GUIDE

Season/Holy Day	Wide Banner	Small Banner
Advent	Prepare the Way of the Lord	image of advent candles
Christmas	Unto Us a Child is Born	Joy to the World
Epiphany	Christ Shines in the Darkness	n/a
Lent	Repent and Return	image of crown of thorns
Easter	Christ is Risen	n/a
Ordinary Time	Come, Holy Spirit, Come	n/a

Liturgical Color Calendar 2026

January

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1*	2*	3*
4*	5*	6*	7*	8*	9*	10*
11*	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15*	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3*	4*
5*	6*	7*	8*	9*	10*	11*
12*	13*	14*	15*	16*	17*	18*
19*	20*	21*	22*	23*	24*	25*
26*	27*	28*	29*	30*		

May

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1*	2*
3*	4*	5*	6*	7*	8*	9*
10*	11*	12*	13*	14*	15*	16*
17*	18*	19*	20*	21*	22*	23*
24	25	26*	27*	28*	29*	30*
31*						

June

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

July

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

August

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1*	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22*	23	24	25	26	27	28
29*	30*					

December

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1*	2*	3*	4*	5*
6*	7*	8*	9*	10*	11*	12*
13*	14*	15*	16*	17*	18*	19*
20*	21*	22*	23*	24*	25*	26*
27*	28*	29*	30*	31*		

* Alternative color may be used on these days.
White Square with * = White or Gold | Purple Square with * = Purple or Blue | Gray Square with * = No Color (Paraments) or Red

SETTING THE ALTAR – PHOTOS



chalice- metal



chalice-stoneware



communion wine



corporal



credence table & aumbry



palls



paten



purificator



reserved hosts

(consecrated)



stoneware dish

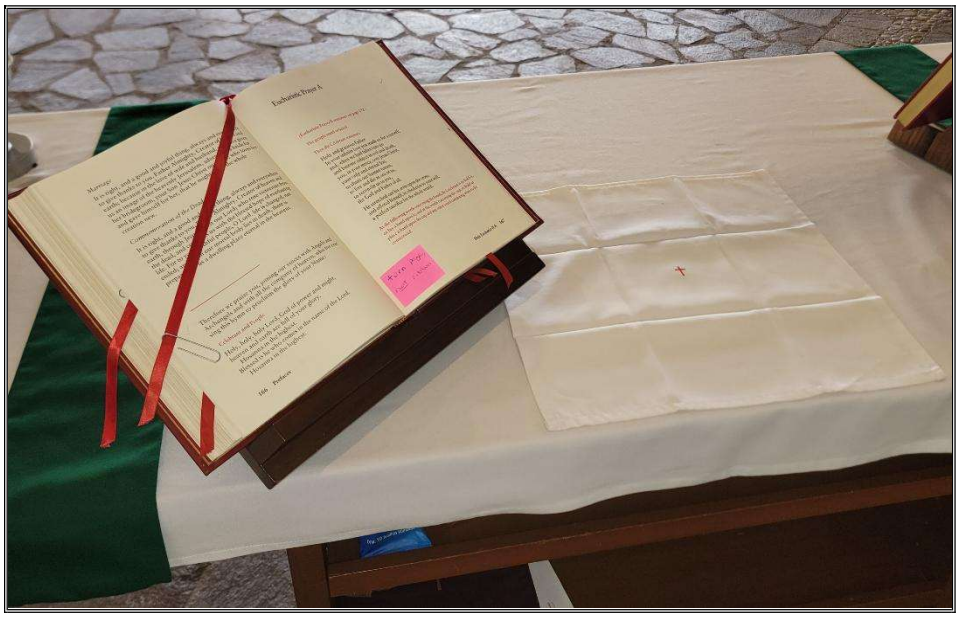
(ciborium)



front view of altar, before service



side view of altar, before service



rear view of altar, before service



credence table, before service

GREETER

Before the service:

- Retrieve hymnals from the shelf and place them on the entry table.
- As worshippers arrive, warmly greet them and offer a hymnal as well as a printed bulletin (or the laminated low-season sheets printed with the order of service).
- For visitors during low season, point out the Wi-Fi information and explain the lessons are pinned to the church's Facebook page.
- Visitors should also be encouraged to add their information to the email list if they'd like to receive future newsletters and other communications

During the service:

- Watch for late arrivals and hold open the door for them if needed. Quietly but warmly greet them, and give them a hymnal, bulletin or laminated sheet, and Wi-Fi instructions if needed.
- Direct them to an open seat if one isn't immediately obvious to them.

After the service:

- As worshippers exit, accept the hymnals and bulletins from them. Dispose of printed bulletins. If using low-season laminated sheets, stack them neatly.
- Afterward, replace the hymnals on the shelf.

CRUCIFER (CROSS-BEARER) and ALTAR SERVER

This servant performs two roles: carrying or holding the processional cross, and turning the Altar Book pages.

Prior to start of service:

- Ensure the ribbons/bookmarks of the Altar Book are placed in the appropriate pages. If needed, use paper clips to keep the ribbons firmly in place.
- Ensure a copy of the service bulletin is on or near your seat behind the altar.
- Vesting in an alb (white robe) is optional, or at the priest's discretion.

At the start of service:

- Hold the processional cross at the back of the church during the first verse of the processional hymn.
- At the beginning of the second verse, slowly proceed forward and stop 2 feet away from the center front point of the altar.
- The priest, who has processed behind you, will then stand to your left, stop and bow. *The crucifer does not bow while holding the cross.*
- As the priest completes their bow, veers left, and approaches the rear of the altar, you will veer right, proceed behind the altar, and place the cross in its holder.

During service:

- During the reading of the Spanish-language Gospel, the crucifer will hold the cross near the lectern. Afterward, the crucifer will then proceed toward the rear of the church, facing approximately 8-10 feet from the priest, as the priest reads the English-language Gospel.
- At the conclusion of the English-Gospel reading, the crucifer will head back behind the altar and place the cross in its holder.
- The altar server duties start immediately after the offertory when the Great Thanksgiving begins to be read from the Altar Book. The altar server will turn the pages as needed until the congregation is invited to the altar to receive the Eucharist.

As service concludes:

- As the first recessional verse is concluding, pick up the cross and hold it. At the beginning of the second verse, proceed to the front of the altar and stand facing the altar.* The priest will bow to the left of the cross and begin to turn toward the exit. At that time, you should turn, too, and slowly proceed toward the exit, with the priest following you. Stop near the exit door until the recessional hymn concludes.

- At the priest's discretion, the crucifer will recite the dismissal as printed in the bulletin.

- Place the cross on its holder outside the storage closet.

After service:

- Retrieve the sandwich board (and any other directional signage) from outside the church.

---

*If the recessional hymn is unusually short, proceed during the first verse instead.

LECTORS

Before the service:

Readings are usually assigned by Friday. Lectors should read and re-read their scripture until they feel comfortable delivering it.

If the scripture contains unfamiliar words or names, utilize online resources to confirm the pronunciation, such as:

- Biblical Word Pronunciation Guide

  https://www.netministries dot org/resources/resource-pronunciation-guide

- How to Pronounce.com

  https://www.howtopronounce.com

- Forvo
  www forvo.com

Upon arriving at the church, verify that the microphone is **on**. If needed, slide the button on the microphone to the "on" position.

During the Service:

Old Testament, Psalm, New Testament, and Prayers of the People lectors: When it is your turn to read, proceed forward toward the altar, bow reverently, and then stand behind the lectern.

Be sure the microphone is very close to your mouth—gently bend the mic stand if needed.

Note: The Spanish Gospel reader should walk toward the altar, bow reverently, receive the Spanish Gospel book from the presider, and then carry the book to the lectern. After concluding the reading, carry the book to the front of the altar and return it to the presider.

CHALICE BEARER

During the passing of the peace:

Transfer the chalices and hosts to the altar and center them on the corporal as follows:

- Draped metal chalice at the far front edge of the corporal
- Stoneware chalice in the middle (on top of the embroidered cross)
- Stoneware host dish at the near edge of the corporal. However, if the hosts were already consecrated (reserved hosts), place them off the corporal, to the right side behind the Gospel book(s).

If the airtight reserved host container is on the credence table, transfer it to the altar behind the Gospel book(s).



overhead view from right rear



view from right side

As communion begins:

- Receive the metal chalice from the presider. Stand at the right front of the altar, holding the chalice and purificator (cloth).
- As congregants come forth, hand the chalice to them and say "The blood of Christ, the cup of salvation." *
- As each congregant returns the chalice, wipe the rim and then turn the chalice at least 1/3 turn.
- If someone attempts to intinct a host, politely and discretely direct them back to the presider for intinction in the stoneware chalice instead.

*Other phrases may be used at the presider's discretion, such as: "May the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you in everlasting life." This phrase is especially appropriate for congregants who may approach the chalice but who choose to not drink from it.

As communion ends:

- Return the metal chalice and purificator (cloth) to the credence table.
- As the presider places the paten, stoneware chalice, stoneware host dish and linens on the rear right corner of the altar, transfer those items to the credence table.
- Reverently consume any remaining consecrated wine (optional) and then return to your seat.

OFFERTORY

During the service:

- As the offertory song begins, one or two servants should retrieve the offertory basket(s) from the back of the church and then walk slowly to the seated parishioners, extending the basket toward them to collect offerings.
- Return to the back of the church. If two baskets were used, combine both baskets into one and determine which servant will present the offertory at the altar.
- When the doxology begins, the designated servant will slowly walk toward the altar holding the basket with both hands. Upon reaching the front of the altar, they will raise the basket to approximately head height and then place it on the front right of the altar- immediately in front of the altar book. They will then slowly back from the altar approximately two or three steps, bow, and return to their seat.

After the service:

- Two offertory counters will retrieve the offertory basket from the altar. They will each count the offertory funds, document the amount on the offertory form, initial the form, and then place the funds and form in an envelope.

- The sealed envelope should then be given to the treasurer. In the treasurer's absence, they should make arrangements to keep the envelope secure in the interim.