

## KIDS IN THE DIVINE SERVICE



### What are the peculiar windows in the church?

If you look around while sitting in the Divine Service, you'll most likely see windows that are different than the windows in your house. These windows are made with pieces of colored glass. These colored pieces may even have designs painted on them. Stained glass windows are a very important part of the church building.

### Why do we have stained glass windows in the church?

Stained-glass windows add to the beauty of God's house, but that's not all that they do. These windows are designed to teach us. If you look closely at the windows, you'll find that most of them contain wonderful imagery. This imagery usually depicts **stories from the Bible**, different **Christian symbols** or different **articles of the Christian faith**; and it's all wrapped up in beautiful pictures made from colored and painted glass! What a wonderful way to glorify our Lord and to proclaim the Gospel!



**Parents:** After worship, be sure to walk around and look at the windows with your child. If there are windows with different themes, take a few moments each week to discuss the individual teaching points of each window. Encourage your child to ask the pastor for help.

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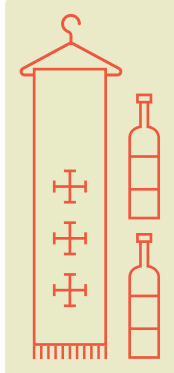
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## What do we call the room near the sanctuary?

The room near the sanctuary is called the “sacristy.” See if you can find the door to the sacristy in your church. The use of sacristies became common over 1500 years ago. In most churches you will find the sacristy beside or behind the altar area (called the chancel).



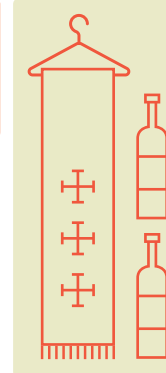
## What is it used for?

**The sacristy is the storage place for the sacred items used in God’s house.** For example, the vessels and utensils used for Holy Communion are stored there, as well as extra candles, oil and banners. Keeping them in a separate room helps to ensure they are not broken, misplaced or disturbed in any way. Some churches may have two kinds of sacristies. One is the “clergy sacristy” where the pastor keeps his vestments (the clothes he wears during the service). The other is the “altar guild sacristy” where the people who help keep the chancel looking nice store their supplies.



**Parents:** Before or after the service, allow your children to go into the sacristy to get a better look. Instruct them to be careful. The items there are set aside for use in the service. Help them to remember why the church uses a sacristy.

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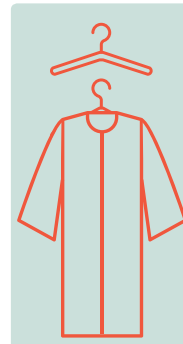
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### What is a “parament”?

A parament (pronounced PAIR-uh-ment) is a colored piece of cloth that hangs on the important items of furniture in the sanctuary. **Can you**

**find the altar?** You may see a colored piece of cloth hanging on it. This parament is called the “frontal” or “superfrontal.” **Can you find the pulpit?** The pulpit has a parament, too, as do many of the important furniture items in the sanctuary. Look around to see how many paraments are in your church.



### Why do we use paraments?

Paraments honor God and beautify His sanctuary based on the seasons of the Church Year. For example, during the season of Pentecost, the paraments are green. During Lent, the paraments are purple. The word “parament” comes from the Latin word “parare” which means “to decorate or adorn.” The paraments are not silent decorations. Each parament helps to proclaim the wonderful news of salvation through Jesus Christ!



**Parents:** Before or after worship, allow your child to get a closer look at the paraments in the sanctuary. (Remind them to be reverent in God’s holy places.) Instruct them that the colors might be different than what they would expect at certain times in the Church Year. For example, the paraments are red on Reformation Day even though it falls during the season of Pentecost.

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# KIDS IN THE DIVINE SERVICE



## What is the “altar”?

**When you walk into the sanctuary, what is the first thing you notice?** Maybe you see the beautiful stained glass windows. Maybe you noticed the candles. Of all the wonderful sights in our sanctuary, one thing probably comes to your attention first: the altar. The altar is the large, table-like object located directly in the center at the front of the building. The word “altar” comes from the Latin word “altare,” which means “a place for offering sacrifices.”

## Why do we have an altar when we don’t sacrifice anything on it?

It’s kind of scary to think that we might use an altar for sacrifice. We look at the altar through the eyes of the Gospel. On the top of the altar are often carved five crosses — one for each of the five wounds of Christ. They mark this altar as a place where no more blood sacrifices will occur. The only sacrifice needed was made on the cross. The altar is a place where Christ gives out the forgiveness He earned for us through His death and resurrection. Wow, the altar sure is an important place!



**Parents:** During the service, direct your children’s attention to the altar. Point out that during the Divine Service this is where God has promised to come to be with us. After the service, take your children up to the altar to observe. Remind them to be reverent in God’s holy place.

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## What is the "baptismal font"?

In church, the baptismal font is a place where we see the Holy Spirit do His stuff! As St. Paul says in Titus: "He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:5-7). This all happens at the baptismal font.

## Why do we use a baptismal font?

Baptism is important in the lives of God's people. In Baptism you were given the forgiveness of sins, rescued from death and the devil, and given salvation. All of this comes to you through God's Word with the water in Baptism. The font reminds us of the wonderful gift of God's forgiveness. It also reminds us that our old sinful self has been drowned, and a new person arises to live in faith!



**Parents:** Before or after the service, allow your child to walk up to the baptismal font to get a better look. Remind them to be reverent in God's holy places. During the service, when the sign of the cross is made on the congregation, remind your child that the sign of the cross was made on them at their Baptism. It was there that they were marked as one redeemed by Christ.

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## What is the candle in the sanctuary that stays lit all the time?

I'll bet you can count all of the candles in the church. There are quite a few. If you decide to try, don't forget to count the one that stays lit all the time. That's right, that little light in there is a candle! This particular candle is called an "eternal flame." This candle burns all the time. **Look close from where you are sitting. When you find it, maybe you can see it glowing.**

## Why do we have a candle that stays lit all the time?

When we see the eternal flame we are reminded that God is always present in our lives, and He promises to never leave us. God is especially present in His sanctuary where we hear His living Word and receive his wonderful Sacraments. If the candle burns out, we re-light it or put another one in its place. In other words, we do our best to keep it lit 24 hours-a-day.



**Parents:** Before or after the service, direct your child's attention to the eternal flame hanging above the altar. Remind them that this candle stays lit all year. Allow them to walk up to the altar in order to get a better look. Remind them to be reverent in God's holy place.



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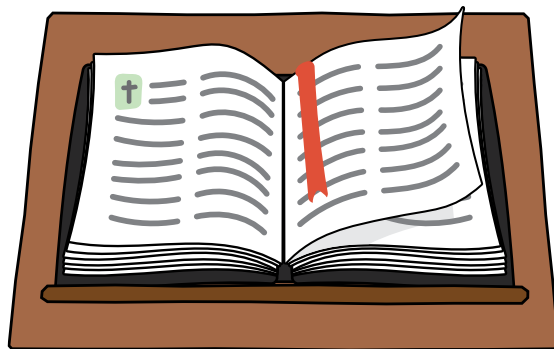


# KIDS IN THE DIVINE SERVICE

## What is the “lectern”?

When the Lord calls us together for worship, He feeds us with His wonderful Word and Sacraments. In most churches, **the Bible**

**sits on a stand called a “lectern.”** The word “lectern” comes from the Latin word “lectio,” which means “reading.”



## Why is the Bible read from a lectern?

For thousands of years, God’s living Word has been read to His people. When this Word is read to us, we remember that God continues to deliver His promise of salvation to us through faithful preaching and teaching. With the help of the lectern, our church Bible is in a great place for reading to all of God’s people!



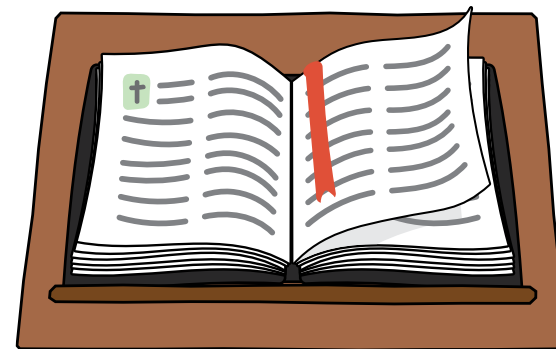
**Parents:** Before or after the service, allow your child to walk up to the lectern in order to get a better look. Allow them to look at the church Bible. Remind them to be reverent in God’s holy places. During the service, before the readings, remind them that they are about to hear God’s Word, and the lectern holds the Bible that they will hear God’s wonderful promises from!

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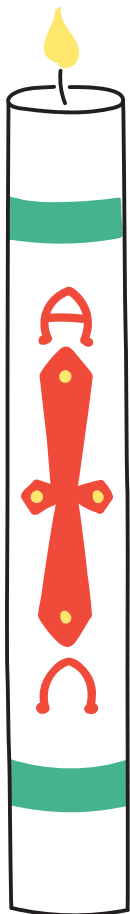
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### What is that great big candle?

There are many candles in our church sanctuary. Some we light every Sunday. Some we only light on certain occasions. The tall candle that you see up front, possibly next to the Baptismal font or up in front next to the altar, is one of those candles. That's the Paschal Candle!

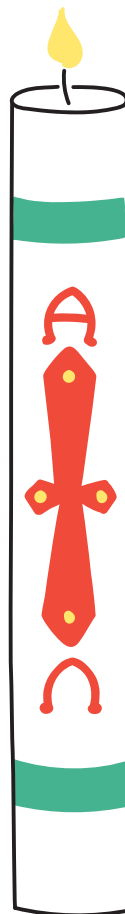
### What is the Paschal Candle used for?

The Paschal Candle reminds us of Jesus' victory over death. Do you remember the story of the pillar of fire that led the Israelites at night in the wilderness after the Lord delivered them from slavery in Egypt? When Jesus died on the cross, He released us from the slavery of darkness and death due to our sin. Now, through our Baptism, we have been buried with Him in His death and we are now raised to new life through His resurrection! The Paschal Candle reminds us of this. Let that Gospel light shine!



**Parents:** Before or after the Divine Service, take your children up to look at the Paschal Candle. Point out the beautiful symbols on its surface that remind us of our Savior and what He has done for us. Remind them that "Jesus Christ is the Light of the world, the Light no darkness can overcome." (*Lutheran Service Book*, 243)

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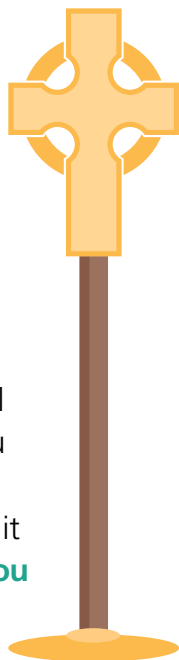
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### What is the “processional cross”?

The processional cross is the cross attached to a long pole that is carried into the sanctuary during a processional hymn. During the Entrance Hymn on festival Sundays, a crucifer will carry the processional cross followed by the acolyte and pastor. Maybe you have seen this happen in your church. When the processional cross is not being used in a procession, it sits in a stand in the front of the sanctuary. **See if you can find it right now.**



### Why do we use a processional cross?

When the processional cross enters the sanctuary, we stand to honor our risen Lord and remember that He comes to be with His Church. We especially remember, during festival times in the Church, the reason we are celebrating: Jesus’ death on the cross to save us from our sins, and His resurrection to prove it! **So, when that cross comes marching in, keep your eye on it.** Remember that Christ has come to be with us in His Word and Sacraments. What a wonderful way to begin the Divine Service!

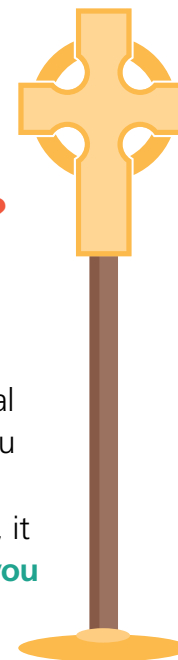


**Parents:** Before or after the service, allow your child to walk up to the processional cross to get a better look. Remind them to be reverent in God’s holy places. During the service, when the cross is being carried in, remind them that our Lord actually comes to be with us every Sunday in His Word and Sacraments. He is really here!

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### What is the “pulpit”?

You probably noticed that the pastor preaches to the congregation from the same place in the church almost every time. This place is called the pulpit. The word “pulpit” comes from the Latin word “pulpitum,” meaning “scaffold.” Do you know what a scaffold is? A scaffold is a platform which is raised high up into the air. If you have ever seen someone washing windows on a building, they were probably standing on a scaffold.

### Why do pastors preach from a pulpit?

Before the invention of the microphone, it was sometimes hard to hear what the pastor was saying. By raising the place where the pastor preaches, he could better project his voice for all of the people present to hear the wonderful Gospel. Raising the pulpit above everything else also helps to signify the importance of proclaiming God’s pure Word. What a wonderful invention the pulpit is!



**Parents:** Before or after the service, allow your child to walk up to the pulpit to get a better look. Encourage them to step into the pulpit to get a view of the congregation. Remind them to be reverent in God’s holy places. During the service, before the sermon, remind them that pastor is about to preach God’s Word and that the pulpit will help them to see and hear him clearly!

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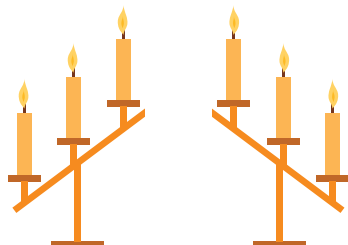


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## Why do we use candles in the Divine Service?



Imagine that you are attending a worship service 500 years ago. Since there are no lights, even during the daytime, the church is dark. How will you see what is going on? How will you see the pastor? How will you walk up to the altar to receive the Lord's Supper? As you probably guessed, one of the first uses for candles in church was to give light in the sanctuary. Actually, oil lamps were probably used until the fourth century when candles became more common.



## Is there more to using candles than just lighting the room?

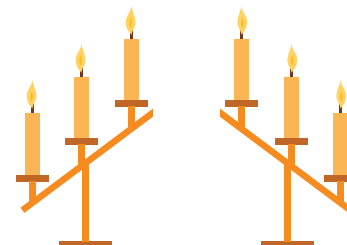
With the invention of the light bulb, candles were no longer needed to light the church. That doesn't mean they lost their importance in the church. Candles have been used for hundreds of years to symbolize Christ's words when he said: "I am the Light of the world" (John 8:12). **Candles remind us that Jesus is the Light that has conquered the darkness of sin.** As you can see, candles play an important role in our worship.



**Parents:** When the candles are lit at the beginning of the service, remind your children that Christ is the Light of the world. Teach them that when the candles are lit, we are honoring our God and recognizing His presence in the sanctuary. He is really here just as He promised!

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### Why is there a rail in the front of the church?

That railing you see up near the altar is the altar rail. Some churches might even have a chancel rail a few steps away from the altar rail nearer to the congregation. **Does your church have both of these rails?**

### What are these rails used for?

The chancel rail divides the church into two important parts: the “nave,” which is the largest part of the church where the congregation sits; and the “chancel,” which is the part of the church where the altar is located. The altar rail separates the altar from the rest of the chancel. It used to be, back in the Middle Ages, these rails were important for separating the congregation from the pastor or priest. As our understanding of the Lord’s Supper changed, the rails began to be used for more practical purposes. They became helpful places for God’s people to kneel and receive His wonderful gifts. They are also used for confirmation, marriages, and other events in the church.



**Parents:** Before or after the service, direct your children’s attention to the chancel and altar rails. Allow them to walk up to the rails in order to get a better look. Encourage them to make the sign of the cross, kneel and pray. Remind them to be reverent in God’s holy place.



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