

## **A Handbook for Lectors** ***Church of the Holy Spirit Anglican***

### Purpose

The lector carries out his/her primary function during the Liturgy of the Word, proclaiming God's Word to His people so that, strengthened by the words of Holy Scripture, they might come to a deeper love of God and a fuller Christian life.

### Responsibilities

A few reminders for Lectors:

- If you are unable to read on your assigned day, please find your replacement.
- Please call or e-mail Brenda Price and let her know of the replacement or trade of service dates. Please do not call the church office. Brenda will notify those involved.
- If you are ill or facing a travel emergency and are unable to find a replacement, please call Brenda as well, but remember that, under normal circumstances, making an effort to find replacements is your responsibility.

### Preparation

The lector serves an important liturgical role in proclaiming the Word of God and it is important that a knowledge and familiarity with scripture and its proclamation be developed in a way to benefit the Christian assembly. This preparation consists of the lector nourishing his/her own prayer life with the study of the Sacred Scriptures and regular scriptural reading. In addition, it is expected that the preparation consist of learning the vocal techniques of proclamation, so that one may use the resources of human voice in such a way that the intonation, pitch, pacing, and timbre of speech effectively to convey the content of Holy Scripture.

Before reading, it is crucial that the lector ensure familiarity with the text he/she is to proclaim by reading the passages prior to the day, and even practicing, as well as learning the context for the purpose of understanding. One should take care to avoid any sense of the dramatic, while presenting the readings in all their depth and richness, or producing a dull recitation.

Movements or gestures should be kept minimal. Posture should be one of dignity.

### Dress

The task of the lector is to help the gathered assembly to encounter God in His Word. Therefore, everything the lector does should aid in focus on the scripture. One should dress in a manner that honors Christ, is neat and professional, and modest so as not to reveal or distract – avoid jeans, flip-flops, shorts, etc.

### Mechanics

It is expected the lector will attend to the service and be ready to do his/her part. The lector will make a profound bow (a full bow at the waist) at the entrance to the chancel (the top of the third step), upon approaching and descending. If you are already seated in the chancel (i.e., chalice bearers), proceed directly to the podium.

With a clear, articulate voice, the reading will be announced as:

**A reading from** [book of the Bible – no chapter or verse reference]...

Allow a short pause after the first reading before the Psalm.

**The portion of the Psalter appointed for today is Psalm** [include chapter and verses] **found on page ? of your bulletin... We will read it:**

- **in unison**
- **responsively by the whole verse**
- **alternately, beginning with** (designated by men/women or Epistle/Gospel side). Be sure you lead first!

Eye contact with the congregation is important throughout, but especially at the beginning of the reading and at the end.

The psalm serves as a meditation. At the conclusion of the psalm, the lector will turn and face the altar when speaking the Gloria Patri (Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit...). You need not cross yourself when reciting the Gloria Patri.

The second reader should be standing by the time the first reader returns to

the entrance of the chancel. He/she should begin to approach the sanctuary as the first reader leaves so as to limit delay between the readings.

The readings conclude with “**The word of the Lord...**” with one exception. If the reading is from the Apocrypha, the appropriate conclusion is “**Here ends the reading.**”

The Prayers of the People should be led amidst the people in the middle of the nave (the center of the aisle, aligned with the second window from the end). As the intercessions are intentions of prayer texts, they should be prayed, not merely read. The lector's way of praying should also assist and invite the rest of the assembly to pray. When the congregation is invited to voice intercessions, pause until speaking slows.

The speaking style used by a lector should take care to not embellish the Scripture. One should use clear, intelligent, and articulate speech, projecting with simple inflection, appropriate phrasing, and adequate pacing. Emotion appropriate to the reading is encouraged, yet lectors should avoid the temptation to dramatize. By this we mean a feigned “emotion of stately dignity that suggests that one has been invited to substitute for a television announcer of the old school. In doing this one gives the impression: 'I am more than pleased to be reporting to you from a service in Westminster Abbey which the BBC is proud to present.'” (from Peter P. Kenny, “The Ministry of Lector”)

If you have questions about pronunciation, ask or refer to: <http://netministries.org/Bbasics/bwords.htm>

We thank you for your dedicated service to our Lord through the ministry of Lector. Your ministry, sharing the Word of God, leading prayers for the congregation and their loved ones, represents a powerful witness to our congregation. We hope that you will see your service to Christ and His church as an act of worship, that you will sense the Lord's presence, that you will develop the gifts God has given you for service in his church, and be as blessed by your time and preparation as we are for having you serve with us.