

LECTOR INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE WORSHIPING CHURCH

The Lutheran Church of the Resurrection is a worshiping church, a communion of saints, a royal priesthood, that fully comprehends and practices the rich heritage of the Lutheran Church as was first learned through the strong faith and doctrine preached by Martin Luther.

Luther felt that the liturgy needed to be restored rather than abolished. The suppression of the Word was one of his highest concerns. As a priest, often stories of saints or martyrs were given instead of Scripture. Luther later stated:

“This is the sum of the matter: that everything shall be done so that the Word prevails... We can spare everything except the Word. We profit nothing so much as by the Word. For the whole Scripture shows that the Word should have free course among Christians. And in Luke 10, Christ himself says; ‘one thing is needful’ – that Mary sit at the feet of Christ and daily hear his Word...”

As lectors, one thing that is of paramount importance for us to remember is that many of our congregants only hear the Word of God on Sunday mornings – not daily as Christ says in Luke 10. Therefore, it becomes an even greater responsibility for us to give our due diligence to bring the Scriptures to everyone in attendance to our very best ability. Practice, practice, practice.

Here are a few extra websites for you to go to for researching the Scriptures a bit further (this year we are on Series A). Unfortunately, none of them, sometimes, always matches our readings exactly as they may be off by one or two verses or even a chapter even though we are all on Series A. But there is so much information that any of it would apply to your Scripture reading for the Sunday.

liturgy.slu.edu (hit “skip first page”)
lectorworks.org
lectorprep.org

All of this may seem to be just toooo much information for you to absorb. Just look at it and glean from it what you can and do the best that you can. Nothing more can be asked of any of us. None of us will read the same as another and that is neither good nor bad. God will accept and richly bless our efforts.

God bless you for accepting the Call to the Lector Ministry.

IMPORTANT DETAILS **TO REMEMBER**

- 1) Pray to the Holy Spirit to guide the Words of your mouth as you proclaim the Holy Scriptures to the congregation.
- 2) Move with dignity, reverence and grace. Reverence the altar.
- 3) Approach the lectern and adjust the microphone (if possible, before Church begins). The lectern mike is one directional. Point it to your nose and not your mouth.
- 4) Take a breath, pause and make eye contact with the congregation prior to announcing the Scripture.
- 5) Make eye contact with the congregation throughout your reading as much as possible. It is both spoken and heard. The lector proclaims and the assembly listens. This process is what brings the Word of God to life.
- 6) Breathing correctly is crucial to proclaiming well.
- 7) Take notice of your pitch, volume and projection.
- 8) Take notice of your diction and articulation. When speaking publicly, open your mouth and utilize your tongue and lips.
- 9) Be confident of pronunciation of difficult names and words.
- 10) Be aware of articulating consonants like t's and d's - and ing's.
- 11) **Practice** is crucial to proclaiming the Word of God effectively.
- 12) As you practice, ask yourself if you are able to show insight into the meaning of the text. Are you pausing, phrasing, and breathing appropriately?
- 13) Dress appropriately. No shorts!

CONGRATULATIONS! YOU HAVE DONE IT!
YOU HAVE BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS!!!!

Small note: If someone comes up and tells you how wonderfully you have done, say, "thank you", and don't let this go to your head. If you believe your publicity, you are done for. But, if someone comes up to you and says that he/she heard something they never heard before or felt what you said in his/her heart, then you have done your job well. In other words, you hit the mark when the congregation hears the Word of the Lord and not you! Most of the time you will never know if you hit the mark or not, so you just have to keep trying, keep perfecting your art and keep the Word close to your heart.

PRACTICE TECHNIQUES

By accepting the Call to be a Lector, you are allowing God to use your voice to bring His written Word to life to those who hear it. Your proclamation of God's Word, if done effectively, can be one that transforms the hearts and minds of the parishioners. It is His Word that gets us started and motivates us to come to His altar. It is through the Holy Spirit that Scripture becomes the Word of God for us and for our fellow parishioners. It is with a loud, clear and confident voice that we can communicate love, warmth, reverence, enthusiasm and familiarity with His Word as we read each Sunday.

Congregants must be attentive and know how it applies to their lives. Therefore, your proclamation should convey a sense of knowledge and familiarity with God's Word.

So how do we best do all of this effectively? Practice, practice, practice. BUT – it is not just reading the Scripture(s) to yourself. It is best done, after studying the helps available to assist us in understanding the texts, by finally **reading it aloud**. This can be done in the privacy of a room, in front of a mirror or in front of another person. You can then better “hear” the tone of your voice, your articulation and your pronunciations. You can “hear” your pauses and your silences. You can “hear” how you breathe and see how you stand. Your posture is important. It also affects your breathing. And, you can “hear” how you pace yourself. If you think you are reading too slowly, you are probably reading just right! God's Word needs to be communicated or “proclaimed” and not just read as words on a page. Almost anyone can do that.

The Scriptures are basically in four groups; as a poem, a narrative, a letter or a prophesy. The help notes available to you will be able to help you with this and help you fully comprehend the reading. Sometimes, a reading will have a bit of one or two and that will require a different type of communication for each. That is why it is so important for you to become as familiar as possible with your lessons to be read.

We do not want a monotone nor do we want any melodramatics. We are not actors. We are just attempting to do our very best. Think of how you might read a story to a child and how you might animate your reading to make that story come alive to the child. It is a bit of that kind of animation that you can bring to Scripture. And – when there is a question mark at the end of a sentence, READ IT AS A QUESTION.

There is another tip for you to consider and that is to stay away from milk and sugar one hour before reading as they can create congestion which can affect your voice.

Remember that proclaiming the Word is different from just reading aloud in public. Reading Scriptures can be informative, persuasive and sometimes entertaining. It can do

all of these things, but it is really meant to refresh and strengthen the faith of our parishioners!

And, finally, remember that **practice is crucial!** We will discuss more techniques in the workshop.

Lutheran Church of the Resurrection
Lector Instructions

At each Sunday service a lector assists the pastor and congregation by reading the lesson(s) and, when used, the psalmody.

The assigned lector should do two things prior to the service:

During the week prior to the service, the church office mails or e-mails a copy of the lesson(s) to be read, so you can practice. Attached to these instructions is a pronunciation guide for words that might not be familiar. You can also make notes on your copy to help pronounce unfamiliar words and/or to mark words or phrases you want to emphasize in your reading to the congregation. Color coding your copy for emphasis can help enormously.

Arrive at church in good time before the start of the service. Please place your reading on the lectern well before the service starts. At the same time, adjust the microphone to suit your height, before you actually read. When you do come up to read, these simple steps will allow your reading to fit seamlessly into the flow of the service. In the time before the service review the order of service in the bulletin. Note the order of the service and what will take place between readings.

At the correct time in the service, the lector proceeds to the pulpit for the reading of the first lesson. The reading begins with the lector announcing where the lesson is from, as simply as possible: “*A reading from* (book title) .” For example: “*A reading from Romans.*” There is no need to announce the chapter and verse, as it is printed in the bulletin. Do not allow your announcement to detract from the reading itself. After the reading, the lector says: “*Word of God, Word of Life*”, as printed in the bulletin.

If the lector is to read only one lesson, you’ll want to skip the following three paragraphs and go directly to the last two paragraphs of these instructions.

A psalm may follow the first lesson. You will want to check with the pastor to see if the psalm is to be sung, if he will lead the congregation is reading it, or if he wishes for you to do so. If the latter, the lector will announce the psalm and remind the congregation to repeat the antiphon at each “Rx”. The leader (pastor, lector or choir) typically reads the odd numbered (lighter print) verses, and the congregation responds with the even-numbered (bold print) verses.

The second lesson is introduced in the same manner as the first, using an introductory sentence like the one quoted above. The lector then returns to his or her seat in the congregation.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR THE VALUABLE ASSISTANCE YOU PROVIDE TO MEMBERS AND GUESTS THROUGH YOUR SERVICE.