



# THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY

## Reading the Word — Lectors

### INTRODUCTION

The supreme act of Christian worship on this side of Heaven is when the Church gathers weekly for the celebration of Holy Communion. Holy Communion, properly understood, includes receiving the sacrament at the Lord's Table and all that precedes it, most particularly the reading of the Word. Table and Word. Word and Table. They are inseparably essential in our worship of God. To have Word without Table or Table without Word would make our service of Holy Communion incomplete.

That our worship is structured around Word and Table, reflects the ancient practice of ordering Christian worship in this way. Historical documents from the early Church, as well as the New Testament itself, testify that when God's people gathered for worship, they had Holy Scripture read to them and celebrated the presence of Christ with them in bread and wine, his Body and Blood.

In fact, our Lord Jesus seemed pleased to reveal himself to his disciples through Word and Table. Read Luke 24: 13-35. Our newly risen Lord appeared to two disciples on the road to Emmaus but they did not recognize him. It is only after he teaches them from God's Word all that the Christ must suffer and in breaking a loaf of bread at Table, that their eyes are opened and they can see the risen Jesus in their midst. He continues to reveal himself to his disciples in this way, including each week in our church's worship service.

Can you see why your ministry as a lector in this church is such a significant one? Through your faithful and effective reading of Holy Scripture, God reveals himself to his people. It is therefore not a ministry to be entered into lightly nor performed carelessly but prayerfully and with reverence for the holy mystery in which you participate.

### FUNCTION

The function of lectors is to read the lessons in the Sunday morning worship service as appointed to do so by the Rector.

### QUALIFICATIONS FOR LECTORS

1. Baptism
2. Membership at Holy Trinity
3. Appointment to that function by the Rector
4. Ability to read clearly, audibly, and with the sense of the passage

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR LEADING THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

1. When you are scheduled to read, please read through the appointed lesson before you arrive on Sunday morning. Prayerfully consider the text. Ask God to make it come alive in your life in the days leading up to your reading it. There are some great resources available to help you (see Important Resources below).
2. When it is time for you to read, come forward to the front. Solemnly bow to reverence the cross.
3. Announce the reading just as it appears in the service booklet. Keep it simple. The liturgical structure or instructions should not distract from the reading of scripture.
4. It is of vital importance that the readings be clearly heard. At Holy Trinity we use minimal amplification. Please keep the following in mind:
  - a. Speak slowly and hyper-enunciate. This applies particularly to consonants. What sounds exaggerated and silly to you will just sound normal (and audible!) to people in the congregation.
  - b. Project your voice to ensure everyone can hear your text well.
  - c. Pay close attention to not let your voice trail off at the end of sentences
  - d. You are welcome to make eye contact with the congregation before the beginning of the reading. However, eye contact is not necessary during the reading. It is most important that you read the Scriptures well.
  - e. A dramatic reading of the text is inappropriate because it draws attention away from the reading to yourself, the lector.
  - f. Take your time. Congregations lose their ability to follow if the lesson is read too quickly. You are likely reading through the text faster than you think you are.
5. When you finish the reading, pause (3 to 5 seconds) before you make the acclamation, “The Word of the Lord.”
6. Once the congregation responds, “Thanks be to God,” come to the center, make a solemn bow again to reverence the cross, and then return to your seat.

## IMPORTANT RESOURCES

**Your Assigned Reading** — Your assigned reading will be sent to you several days before the service through Planning Center Online. 90% of the time, we use the Revised Common Lectionary as the source for our appointed lessons. You can look ahead to see the lessons which are appointed at [lectionarypage.net](http://lectionarypage.net).

**Bible Translation** — We use the English Standard Version for our readings. You can find that translation online at [esvbible.org](http://esvbible.org).

**Resources for Reading and Understanding Your Text** — We don’t always preach on each text which is read, so the work you do to grapple with and understand the text may be the ‘sermon’ which preaches the text to the congregation that morning. There are several helpful resources which are available to help you in this.

- [lectorworks.org/blog.html](http://lectorworks.org/blog.html) — This blog was created by a long time lector who has embraced their call to this ministry. It features the coming week’s lessons which have been formatted to help you read well and to accentuate important parts of the scripture.
- [liturgy.slu.edu/](http://liturgy.slu.edu/) — This site from Saint Louis University is very helpful. It enables you to select the Sunday you are scheduled to serve and features some very helpful resources. Notice the link for the *Spirituality of the Readings* as well as *Get to Know the Readings*.
- <http://lectorprep.org/> — This site includes incredible helpful commentary and suggestions on how to communicate God’s truth in an effective way.