

# EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

## Instructions for the Lay Readers / Lectors

- About every four weeks, you should receive an e-mail asking for “blackout” dates—dates you expect not to be available to read—for the following four weeks. Please be sure to reply, even if you have no “blackout” days.
- Sometime after receiving the “blackout” request e-mail, you should receive another e-mail with an attached spreadsheet listing the days you will serve and what you are to read. Please make careful note of your assignments. Re-check the spreadsheet from time to time to remind yourself of your assignment.
- If you cannot serve on the day indicated, make a serious effort to find a substitute; please inform the church office by phone or email so that the correct name is in the bulletin.
- If you are assigned for the following Sunday, you should receive an e-mail with an attached document containing all the readings and the Prayers of the People. Be sure to read through your assigned reading aloud at least once (preferably 2 – 3 times) so that you will understand the text and read it with the proper inflections. If the text contains unfamiliar names, you should also check one of the following Bible pronunciation web pages for the proper pronunciation.

<https://www.netministries.org/resources/resource-pronunciation-guide#>

<http://betterdaysarecoming.com/bible/pronunciation.html#a>

- It is recommended that you make an enlarged copy of what you will be reading and mark it up with proper inflections, correct pronunciations, etc.
- On the day you will be reading, try to arrive around 10 minutes early if attending the service in person, or to sign in to Zoom about 20 minutes early if attending online.

For readers attending the service in person:

- Try to arrive around 10 minutes early and identify yourself to a Welcome Team member. Tell him/her what you are assigned to do. Do not sit down until you have done this.
- Test the microphone to make sure that it is turned on.
- 1<sup>st</sup> reader (or only reader at 8:00 am):
  - Come up to the pulpit after the collect is finished.

- Do NOT sit down immediately after reading the Bible passage. You also read the Psalm which comes directly after the lesson.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> reader:
  - Come up to the pulpit after the Psalm has been read and the 1<sup>st</sup> reader begins to leave the pulpit.
  - When your reading is completed, leave the pulpit immediately so as not to interfere with the Gospel procession.
- Important points to remember when reading Bible passages:
  - If you are unsure if the mike is on, do not tap it and do NOT blow into it (this can cause damage). Simply begin reading and, if it is obvious that it is off, turn it on and start over. People in the congregation will likely let you know if they cannot hear you, but it is also important to observe the expressions on their faces.
  - With the aid of the mike, use the volume level you would use to talk to the people in the seats at the rear of the church.
- For readers leading the Prayers of the People:
  - check for a sheet in the pulpit listing additions to names or other matters for prayer that have been added after the bulletin was printed
  - remain up front until the exchange of peace begins; then return to your seat. If there is a general confession after the prayers, use the kneelers attached to the altar rail.

For readers attending the service online:

- Log in to Zoom around 20 minutes before the service starts and let the rector know you are ready to read and what you will be reading. If you will be leading the Prayers of the People, ask whether there have been any additions to the prayers list that were added after the bulletin was printed.
- You will have the ability to unmute yourself until after your reading is finished; be careful *not* to unmute yourself before beginning to read and to mute yourself again after your reading is finished.
- When the time comes for your reading, unmute yourself and begin reading immediately; you should appear on the screen and be audible after you start reading.
- Watch the chat display for messages indicating that you are not being heard. If you get one, check your mute icon and unmute yourself if necessary. If a technical difficulty prevents you from being heard even after unmuting yourself, someone else will take over the reading.

For all readers:

- When introducing a lesson, identify only the book from which the reading is taken. The document you received with the lessons and prayers will have a line above the lesson beginning, “*Reader: ....*” Read only the text on that line; do not include the chapter and verse numbers.
- If a canticle is appointed after the 1<sup>st</sup> lesson, in place of a Psalm, introduce the canticle by its title only; do not state the canticle number from the prayer book.
- Read slowly – about ½ the speed you would use for ordinary conversation; doing this will:
  - help the congregation to understand all the words.
  - potentially give you time to find your place if you lose it .
- Be careful to pronounce each syllable individually, even if you don’t do this with your normal speech (e.g., say “some-thing”, not “sump’m”.)
- To prevent losing your place, you can either place the tips of your fingers or a straight edge (ruler, book mark) under each line as you are reading. If you make a copy of the text you are reading (highly recommended) you might also try highlighting alternate lines.
- When reading Prayers of the People, before the service starts, be sure to check for the correct pronunciation of each name listed in the part of the prayers “for comfort, healing, courage, and hope”. Many people stay on the list for several weeks, so effort isn’t wasted if you find out the correct pronunciation the week before you are assigned to read. It is a courtesy, and very much appreciated, for a person to hear his/her name pronounced correctly.
- QUESTIONS? – Please do not hesitate to ask Curt Lindsay or another experienced reader.

**REMEMBER:** Bible reading, Psalms, and Prayers are every bit as much a ministry as singing in the choir, offering the communion cup or providing healing prayers during communion. You are a very important part of the service. This ministry should never be taken lightly.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Curt at [lindsay\\_curt@yahoo.com](mailto:lindsay_curt@yahoo.com).

Original document written by Curt Lindsay and Sue Snay  
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