

Dear Lector,

Thank you for volunteering to be a lector for this week's worship service. Your participation helps us hear the voice of God in our midst. Included in this email is a copy of the scriptures you are reading. It is in the format that it will appear in the new "Lectionary Bible" from which you will be reading when you stand in the pulpit on Sunday morning.

When you read the lessons for this Sunday, you are not merely reading a script. You are speaking God's Word for God's people who gather for worship. You will be God's voice in our community, giving voice to the Word that assures us of God's love and calls us into mission. God will speak through you. Your ministry as a lector is very important to our faith community.

God has a Word to speak to us and you will be proclaiming it. Therefore, I want to encourage you to prepare for your ministry carefully. Read the lessons aloud many times prior to Sunday. Practice the words and be sure you understand the message. On Sunday, read it clearly and speak God's Word with dignity and boldness. God needs you to communicate with His people. You will best serve God in this ministry when you are well rehearsed and prepared. You'll find that often there are notes at the bottom of the pages we send you. They contain pronunciation help as well as other cues to help you read well. Attending to these notes will help you in your ministry.

We are beginning to use a lectionary (means "readings") for ritual use. It is a Bible that has been arranged according to how the scriptures are read in worship. We will be using this for the Sunday morning readings. You will find it very helpful because the readings are in a larger print and arranged on the page so that phrases are not broken up by breaks in the lines. It will help you speak God's Word more clearly in the community. Please use this on Sunday mornings.

To strengthen the ministry, I encourage you to practice the following.

1. The Lectionary Bible will be left in the pulpit in the front of the sanctuary.
2. You need to arrive at worship no later than 15 minutes prior to the service so that you can locate the readings in the lectionary and practice. Mark your place with one of the ribbons provided, so that if the book is closed you can locate the readings easily. If the Lectionary Bible is not in its place, locate it and put it in the pulpit so that it is ready for worship.
3. The lectionary contains all readings for the current year. For this reason, you need to make sure you find the correct page in the book: You will need to know the day's date, the scriptures to be read, and the day of the church year (eg: the second Sunday after Pentecost) which can be found in the bulletin.
4. DO NOT USE YOUR BULLETIN TO READ THE LESSONS. Continuous use of the Lectionary Bible will be a symbol that the Word of God continues from week to week, and is part of a larger message to all the people.
5. Begin each lesson by saying: "Good Morning, I am \_\_\_\_\_. During the week I serve God as a (insert your vocation here, ex: Teacher, Healthcare Provider, Father, etc.)" At this point, you should pause before reading the lesson. This helps us remember that what we do throughout the week is directly connected to what we do in worship. It also allows you to be known in the congregation, which is very helpful for those around us, especially visitors and newer members.
6. Each lesson begins with the words noted in the lectionary. The format will generally be the same: "A reading from \_\_\_\_\_." Fill in the blank with the name of the book from which the reading is taken. Do not list chapter and verse. The words are printed at the beginning of each reading to help you remember what to say.
7. End each lesson in the following format: lift the lectionary from the lectern and say, "The Word of the Lord" or "Word of God, Word of Life." In this action and with these words you are announcing to the people what you are reading: The Word of the Lord. Again, don't worry about remembering this phrase. It is printed in the lectionary following each reading. You will, however, have to remember to raise the lectionary for the people to see.
8. When you finish reading, leave the book open in its place.

Thank you for taking part in this important ministry. Again, please remember that you will be God's voice for all who gather for Worship. Prepare well and speak God's word clearly and effectively so all can hear God in our Worship.