

LECTORS AT ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH A CUSTOMARY (A.K.A. CHECKLIST)

Purpose

The role of Lector (sometimes called Lay Reader) is to read aloud to the gathered congregation the Word of God, clearly and with appropriate feeling, so that people gain an understanding of the sense of the passage (some call this oratorical interpretation).

Checklist

- Start preparing to read before the day you are scheduled to read.
 - Read the passage over several times, first quietly, then aloud, until you understand the meaning (see if you can state it in a single sentence).
 - If unfamiliar with the meaning of words or concepts, consult a Bible commentary/dictionary.
 - If unfamiliar with pronunciation of names or places, consult a pronunciation guide.
 - Make a copy of the text and mark it up (for emphasis, pauses, etc.).
- Arrive at church at least 20 min. early.**
 - Check in with the Verger and other Lector (decide who reads first and who reads second).
 - 1st Lector reads Hebrew Scripture and leads Psalm.
 - 2nd Lector reads New Testament Scripture and leads Prayers of the People.
 - Check for changes to lectionary or additions to prayer list, as appropriate.
 - Find a seat near an aisle from which you have easy access to the lectern.

First Reader

The Hebrew Scripture

- After the clergy finishes leading the Collect and says, “Please be seated for the reading of the Scripture,” step quickly to the lectern.
 - Stand behind the lectern, feet shoulder-width apart, and place both hands on the lectern.
- Take a deep breath, and read the introduction written in the bulletin:
 - A reading from the book of ____ (Genesis through the Song of Solomon).
 - A reading from the book of the prophet ____ (Isaiah through Malachi).
- Read the text from the Hebrew Scriptures.
 - Read 25% louder and 25% slower than seems normal to you.
 - Vary your inflection, pitch, and volume for emphasis and to maintain attention.
 - Try to look up and make eye contact with someone at the end of each sentence.
 - When finished, say, “The word of the Lord.” (People respond, “Thanks be to God.”)
 - Remain standing at the lectern.

The Psalm

- Introduce and Lead the Psalm
 - If Psalm is to be sung say, “The Psalm of the day is Psalm _____. We will sing it together.”
 - Remain standing at the lectern until the singing of the Psalm is done, then take your seat.
 - If Psalm is to be recited responsively, say “The Psalm of the day is Psalm _____. We will say it responsively by half verse, breaking at the asterisk, the people saying the words in bold.”
 - Read each verse clearly and deliberately, breaking at the asterisk.
 - When all the verses have been read, return to your seat.

Second Reader

The Epistle (or Letter)

- As the singing or reciting of the Psalm comes to a close, step quickly to the lectern.
 - Stand behind the lectern, feet shoulder-width apart, and place both hands on the lectern.
- Take a deep breath, and read the introduction written in the bulletin:
 - A reading from the book of _____ (The Acts of the Apostles or The Revelation to John).
 - A reading from the (1st/2nd) letter of _____ Paul to the _____ (Romans through Philemon).
 - A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.
 - A reading from the letter of _____ (James or Jude).
 - A reading from the (1st/2nd) letter of _____ Peter.
 - A reading from the (1st/2nd/3rd) letter of _____ John.
- Read the Epistle.
 - Since the Apostle Paul often writes in run-on sentences, you may have to insert pauses (or “mental periods”) to make the letter easier to understand.
 - Remember to read louder and slower than “normal,” to vary inflection, pitch, and volume, and to make eye contact at the end of each sentence.
 - When finished, say, “The word of the Lord.” (People respond, “Thanks be to God.”)
 - Return to your seat.

The Prayers of the People

- The Prayers of the People come just before the Confession and Absolution.
- The Prayers of the People are meant to be read from the midst of the congregation, stand in place at your seat to read the Prayers.
- Read the Prayers of the People directly from the Service Booklet.
 - Pause briefly at the end of each prayer, slightly longer if the “silence” is called for in the service bulletin.
 - At the prayer for the sick, add in the names from those newly added to the prayer list in the past week (see the bulletin insert) or given to you by the clergy or the Verger.
 - At the prayer for the dead, add in the names from those who have died in the past week (see the bulletin insert) or given to you by the clergy or the Verger.
 - At the end of the prayers is the confession. After a somewhat longer pause, begin the Confession.
 - Remain standing while the clergy says the Absolution and introduces “The Peace.”
 - Your job is done.

**LECTORS ARE AN ESSENTIAL PART OF OUR WORSHIP MINISTRY.
MANY THANKS FOR YOUR WILLINGNESS TO SERVE.**

NOTE: More information on reading and leading prayers is available in the [St. Nicholas Church Lector’s Manual](#) and on the SaintNicks.com website, under the tab *Resources for Servers*.