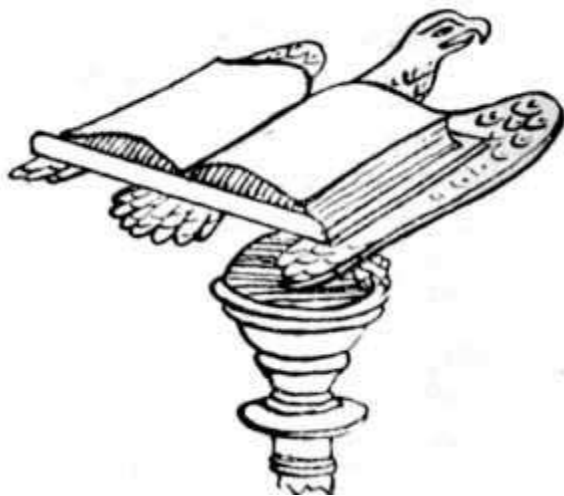


# St. Nicholas' Lectors Manual



*Figure reading from the Lectern*



### **A Thought on Reading...**

Since the beginning of the church, communities have chosen persons for the task of reading Scriptures during worship. Being a lector, however, is more than just fulfilling a task. At its best, reading is a calling, vocation, and a spiritual discipline. Reading is a commitment to effective sharing of Scripture during Eucharist and other community worship time. It is a commitment to preparing oneself so that one's reading becomes a vehicle for God's Word.

### **Who Can be a Reader?**

Anyone who the community who feels he or she is called to read can be reader. One need not be a Shakespearian actor or a public speaker, in order to be a Lay Reader.

## St. Nick's Organization of Lay Readers

### 5:00pm Service:

#### The 1<sup>st</sup> Lector:

##### **Read the Old Testament Lesson from the Lectern:**

Begin Hebrew Scriptures with the words "A reading from the book of . . ." or "A reading from the book of the prophet . . ." End with "The Word of the Lord," or in the case of apocryphal books, "Here ends the reading."

##### **Invite people to read/sing the Psalm**

In the Worship Bulletin you will read inserting the proper Psalm for the day:

*The Psalm appointed today is \_\_\_\_\_. We will sing it together.*

Then remain standing at the lectern be the present leader through the psalm. Feel free to be behind the lectern but step away if you do not want to sing into the microphone.

In Lent, we often read the Psalms responsively. If this is the case, decide before going to the lectern the responsive pattern you wish to use. Then introduce accordingly:

- *The Psalm pointed for today is \_\_\_\_\_. We will read it responsive by whole verse, breaking at the end of each numbered verse.*
- *The Psalm pointed for today is \_\_\_\_\_. We will read it responsive by half verse, breaking at the asterisk.*
- *The Psalm pointed for today is \_\_\_\_\_. We will read it antiphonally by whole verse, the lectern side reading the even side and the pulpit side reading the even verses*

#### The 2<sup>nd</sup> Lector:

##### **Lead the New Testament from the Lectern:**

Begin the Epistle with "A reading from (the, Paul's, Peter's, etc.) letter to the (Corinthians, Hebrews, etc.). End with "The Word of the Lord."

**Lead the congregation in the Prayers of the People from where you are seated in the congregation.**

### 10:00am Service

#### The Lector:

**Read the appointed lesson for the Day either from the Old or New Testament.**

**Lead the congregation in the Prayers of the People**

Note:

To find out the texts for the day you are reading visit the SaintNicks.com website at the following URL: <http://www.saintnicks.com/serviceschedule.php>

## **Tips for Effective Reading**

(Taken From *The Episcopal Church in Almaden*  
<http://www.eca-sj.org/text/layreaders.htm>)

### **Preparation**

When approaching how you will read the text aloud, try to establish the habit of reading meanings rather than words. There is no magic formula, but using these techniques will help you improve your skills.

1. **Become familiar with the reading.** Get the feel of the content and style of the selection.
2. **Think about its meaning.** What is the author saying on the surface? Are there any underlying messages? What are his feelings about his message? What feelings does he want to communicate to his audience? What parts does he want his audience to remember?
3. **Study the words.** Check the dictionary or a concordance for the exact meaning and pronunciation of any unfamiliar names and words.
4. **Mark your copy** of the text as an aid to expression where pauses and stress might be used.
  - a. Underline each word or phrase to be stressed.
  - b. Underline twice parts that have greater stress.
  - c. Pauses can be indicated by a slash (/).
5. **Prayers of the People.** Read over the prayers for the day in the bulletin and prayer requests in the Inside St. Nick's bulletin insert. Please note that you can read the inserted prayers directly from Inside St. Nick's. Get from the verger any additional names for the sick and/or departed and be sure that you have these names in the appropriate place.

### **Before Speaking**

**(at the Lectern or where you will read the Prayers of the People)**

1. First reader – Be sure the lectionary is turned to the correct reading (altar guild does it but never hurts to double check). Be sure to turn the page for the second reader if turning a page is necessary (and it usually is).
2. First reader – Be sure to announce the psalm and then sit down while it is being sung or read.
3. Second reader – Allow for a moment silence after announcing the prayers, then begin the prayer. Allow for silence at the indicated times for people to add their own prayers.

## **Reading the Text Aloud**

There are six tools you can use to make your reading more interesting and varied: volume, speed, tone/inflection, emphasis, eye contact and enthusiasm. When you read, try to read as if you are normally talking to someone and telling a story. Use a "talking" voice rather than a "reading" voice. Relax and let the words flow like a verbal ballet.

Make some parts a narrative, some parts intense, and accent some parts with a dramatic silence.

### **1. Volume**

Your voice should be loud enough to carry to the back of the room. A good technique is to pick out a person in the back of the room and pretend you are reading to them. You can start loud, but later tone your volume down. As you are reading, put a little more emphasis on verbs and words that show action.

### **2. Speed**

A common mistake is to read too fast because of nervousness. Read at a moderate speed, fast enough to move along, but slow enough so your audience can understand you. A good technique is to sometimes slow down just a bit to emphasize a particular part of a sentence, especially an ending. Paul Harvey uses this technique well in his radio broadcasts. You can also slow down if you want to enunciate a word so the audience will understand what you are saying.

If you are reading a narrative with a quotation, or another person starts to speak, pause for a moment, change the pitch of your voice and your tone before reading the quotation. Pause at the end of the quotation to let the audience know the quotation is finished. Then return to your normal narrative pitch and tone.

### **3. Tone/Inflection**

Tone gives your voice melody, and can be like the spice in a good dinner. Tone is a combination of pitch, quality, and strength. You want just enough to make the taste interesting, but not overly strong. Vary your pitch enough so that you don't read in a monotone. You can also change pitch and volume slightly when two people are talking during the narrative so the audience can distinguish between the two.

### **4. Emphasis**

For more effective reading, emphasize verbs and nouns. De-emphasize articles, especially "a" and "the". You can use emphasis by inflection, by force, by change in voice quality, by means of pitch, and by means of pause.

### **5. Eye Contact**

Hold the book with one hand and use a finger on the other hand to mark your place in the text as you read. Periodically, as you are approaching the end of a statement, read far enough ahead so that while you are finishing orating the sentence, you can look up and make eye contact with the audience. Once you have perfected this technique, while reading, you can occasionally direct your gaze to the left, right and center audience, and make direct eye contact with them or look just above their heads. You can also read ahead if you are coming to the bottom of a page and the

reading continues on the other side. If you read ahead, you can turn the page and continue the verbal reading without a pause while you are turning the page.

## **6. Enthusiasm**

Have enthusiasm for what you are reading! Get excited about the message you are reading or the story you are telling. Enjoy the process of reading it. This enthusiasm and enjoyment will reflect in your voice and pass on to the audience.

Practicing these techniques and incorporating them into your reading will help you become a more effective reader. To summarize, follow the rules of good public speaking:

- Adequate volume
- Vocal flexibility
- Some eye contact
- Enthusiasm

Dale Carnegie, who taught speech and wrote *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, said that the greatest fear held by most people, is to get up and speak in front of a group of people.

Winston Churchill stuttered and had a speech impediment. He overcame this and became one of the greatest orators of his time.

You have the same opportunity to overcome any discomfort you might have and share your gifts with others. I hope this gives you some anchors that will help you in this process. Welcome to this ministry and may God be with you as you grow in God's grace in this ministry.

## Resources

### **Interlinear Bible**

<http://bible.crosswalk.com/InterlinearBible/>

### **Lectionary**

<http://www.io.com/~kellywp/>

### **Book of Common Prayer**

<http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/bcp.htm>

### **Pronunciation Guides**

<http://netministries.org/Bbasics/BBwords.htm>

<http://www.betterdaysarecoming.com/bible/pronunciation.html>