

## **SCRIPTURE READERS Reading Guidelines**

### **General**

**The role of Scriptural Reader is one of spiritual leadership. Scriptural reading is not performance, but rather leading the congregation in meaningful Worship. So that the congregation can understand and follow your leadership:**

- **Read at a moderate speed**
- **Read with clarity and purpose**
- **Read naturally and with expression**
- **Practice in advance everything that you are going to read**
- **Plan where you are going to breathe and pause – commas and periods in the text help in that regard**
- **Interact with the congregation – Smile when appropriate; Use eye contact; Project a relaxed attitude.**
- **Remember to breathe when reading – it calms and allows a useful tempo**

### **Call to Worship**

**After the organ prelude has finished, move gently to the podium.**

**So that the congregation can follow you:**

- **Say, first of all: “Good Morning” in a cheerful voice**
- **Then say: “All who are able, please rise for the Call to Worship.”**
- **Pause until the congregation is standing and has located the Call to Worship in the service bulletin**
- **Begin the Call to Worship with confidence**
- **Set a moderate tempo; it will be the tempo that is followed**
- **Allow the congregation time to respond, then proceed with the next line**
- **Follow the same pattern through out the Call to Worship**
- **When finished, return to your chair**
- **It is not necessary to announce the 1<sup>st</sup> hymn – it is in the service bulletin – John Clark will begin playing an introduction to the hymn when you are finished with the Call to Worship**
- **Join in singing the hymn with the congregation. You are still leading.**

**In reading the Call to Worship, you are providing leadership for the congregation. Your voice demonstrates that leadership; it is firm and solid. You are secure because you have practiced. You set a moderate pace for all to follow.**

### **Affirmation of Faith**

**Return to the podium for the Affirmation of Faith**

**Introduce the Affirmation of Faith to the congregation by saying:**

**“Let us affirm our faith by saying together the Affirmation of Faith found on page XXX in the hymnal in your pew.”**

**In addition:**

- **Give members plenty of opportunity to find the Affirmation of Faith in the Hymnal or service bulletin that you have announced, then proceed**
- **Provide confident leadership at the beginning and through out, as with the Call to Worship**
- **Proceed with a moderate tempo**

**There is little difference in leading the Call to Worship and the Affirmation of Faith. “Lead” is an important word for both. That leadership is demonstrated by your attitude – an attitude of confidence, delight at the opportunity to read as a liturgist, and willingness to share your leadership talents with the congregation in worship.**

### **Reading the Scripture**

**Scripture reading involves a different kind of leadership, namely telling God’s story. No matter what portion of either the Hebrew Bible or the Christian Bible, and, no matter whether poetry, history, narrative, description, or parable, the text tells a story. It is our responsibility as scripture readers to assist the text to tell that story so that listeners will understand it. In preparation for reading, that responsibility is fulfilled by:**

- **Choose a version of the Hebrew and Christian Bible with which you are comfortable.**
- **Ask yourself, “What story am I telling?”**
- **Use the answer to the above question as your understanding of the passage**
- **Prepare your oral reading with your understanding in mind**
- **Practice with the text to develop confidence in telling that story as if reading the words on the page to an audience – that means reading it out loud**
- **Use commas and periods to assist intonation and to breathe, and, for appropriate pauses to help provide meaning**
- **Mark those words in the text which you think need to be emphasized to help listener understanding**
- **Prepare the text with larger type, if that will help build confidence**

**In reading the scripture on Sunday:**

- **Return to the podium**
- **Announce the Scripture from which you are reading. “The first scripture for today is \_\_\_\_\_. I will be reading from the \_\_\_\_\_ version of the Bible. You may follow along in your pew bible on page XXX.”**
- **Read with confidence because of the preparation you have given the text**
- **Read at a medium tempo so that the story that you are telling can be understood.**

**When finished reading, please say with a clear and confident voice the phrases:**

**“The Word of God for the People of God!!! Thanks Be to God!!!”**