

Hope Worship Servant HELPS ... for Readers

From the earliest times of the church, the reading of God's Word has been an essential part of Christian worship. God tells us in Romans 10:17 that "Faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ." The one who reads Scripture in our worship service becomes a primary vehicle for God's Word to stir faith in the hearts of God's people! As you read Scripture, you "bring good news to the poor."

Suggested/Necessary Preparation:

- **Pray.** Once you know the passages you will be reading, **pray!** Ask God's help in your reading and to help you understand more fully what is being read.
- **Practice.** Read the Lesson out loud to yourself. If a passage is difficult to read, then practice until you are confident.
- **Ask for help to pronounce difficult words.** Check the internet, check the pronunciation guide (a copy is in the drawer of the Usher table), or ask the pastor before worship. When reading, do the best you can. Read confidently and few people will notice an error!

Reader Guidelines:

- Arrive a few minutes before worship begins. **Sign in on the Worship Servant Sheet at the Usher table.**
- The reading should have been emailed to you prior to the service. Extra copies may be found in a folder on top of the Usher table. You may take it up with you or you may put it on the lectern before worship begins so you won't have to carry it up with you.
- Pray, thanking God for the gifts you've been given and the opportunity to be God's servant.
- As the pastor invites the congregation to be seated for the readings, be at the lectern.
- Stand facing the congregation, directly above the microphone so that it will be most effective in projecting your voice. The microphone will be on.
- Read the introduction on your copy announcing the reading and where it is taken from. For example, "The first lesson is from Genesis, chapter 1" or "The Gospel is from _____"
- There's no need to greet the congregation; simply begin reading, speaking slowly and clearly in a normal tone of voice.
- When you are finished, say, "**The Word of the Lord.**" or **whatever is printed.**
- If there is a song between the readings, you may remain standing at the lectern or sit on the bench just behind you. If there is special music or a long song, it is easier to be seated.
- As you prepare to read the last lesson, invite the congregation to stand, saying "Please stand as you are able." At 10:15 worship, the pastor often invites the congregation to stand at the same time she invites the children to go to Faith Explorers.
- Following the reading(s), read the final closing and response and return to your seat.

Tips for Reading Aloud in Worship

- Worship should be lively; expressive readings invite people to listen closely.
- Be expressive, but not a Shakespearean actor. God's Word is the focus, NOT the reader. If you have prepared, you will have a clear sense of the tone of the reading. Let the text guide you. God's Word should never be heard in a monotone!
- Read slowly, but not too slowly. Reading too fast makes it hard for the congregation to follow. Be aware that when nervous, people often read more quickly.
- Read clearly and enunciate. It will help the listeners hear.
- If you make a mistake, stop and reread the verse. Do not apologize or say, "Sorry." It will just draw attention to the error. Continue reading with confidence, knowing that God expects FAITHFUL worship, not PERFECT worship. Mistakes happen!
- REMEMBER: God's Word is a lamp to our feet and a light for our path! (Ps119:105)