

Lay Reader Guidelines

Thank you for volunteering to be a lay reader! We believe it is important to share worship leadership between clergy and church members – while there are certain tasks that are limited to Ministers of Word and Sacrament, leading worship is something we can (and should) share.

8:15 and 11:15 am

1. Please meet in the preaching pastor's office 15 minutes before worship begins (8 or 11). We will briefly review the worship service and share a short prayer before moving to the outside of the sanctuary.
2. Please process in with the pastors and sit with the pastors until your reading is complete. At that time, you are welcome to stay at the front or return and sit in the pews.
3. **You will read the first scripture reading**, which will be sent to you in advance. Please use the opening and closing words as shown on the practice reading. The rest of the liturgy will be led by the pastors (unless otherwise directed, if one is away).

9:15 am

1. Please be in the fellowship hall no later than 9 am. Due to the current Sunday schedule, you may arrive in advance of the pastors. Don't worry, we'll get there! Please sit near the podium.
2. **You will lead the opening prayer (as has been the custom) and the first scripture reading**, which will be sent to you in advance. Please use the opening and closing words as shown on the practice reading. The rest of the liturgy will be led by the pastors (unless otherwise directed, if one is away).

Basic Tips

1. Take your time. Don't rush. Get yourself settled, and read a bit slower when using a microphone.
2. Practice your reading out loud a few times before Sunday morning. Familiarize yourself with the language and listen for the most appropriate places to pause/take a breath during long sentences.
3. Say it like you mean it – if you can, bring some expression into your voice. This is the Word of God we're reading! It's not a fast food menu. This matters.
4. That said, please avoid using special voices for God or other characters. (For example, if it is a passage in which God is angry, please do not give us your best "angry God" voice.)
5. If you come across a word you don't know how to pronounce, feel free to ask one of the pastors in advance. If you forget to do that, give it your best shot and have confidence in your effort. The truth of the matter is, we don't really know the "right" way to pronounce lots of those places anyways. We do our best and try not to worry about it.
6. If you make a mistake, either correct yourself or just keep going. Don't sweat it.
7. **Remember that you can't do this wrong. Our worship is to be genuine and heartfelt, not perfect. No matter what, the Word of God will be read and proclaimed and God will be praised. God will be with us no matter how much we mess it up. (And: your pastors make mistakes, too. You'll be in good company. Go with the flow.)**