

Reading Scripture and Liturgy in Public

*Designation: Core Requirement for All Layreaders
and a resource for Lectors, and Readers*

Overview

- Reading scripture and liturgy in public is an honor that deserves our time and attention as it provides an opportunity for people to hear God's word.
- Learning how to connect with those who are listening by speaking clearly and audibly helps people understand and make sense of what you are saying.

Objectives

On completion of this course you should be able to

- describe practical steps to effectively read scripture and liturgy in public
- identify the differences between 'reading' to yourself and 'speaking' in public
- read effectively in public

Reading Assignment

- "Scripture Engagement through the Public Reading of Scripture" (Breakout in Pairs to choose key points)
- "How to Read Aloud in Public" (Breakout in Pairs to choose key points)



List Key Points from the
Readings

Handout Review : The Ministry of Scripture Reading During Public Worship

Key Points

- We need to ask ourselves how can we possibly lead others in the worship of the One who is present with each of us and all of us together in ways that go clean beyond our capacity to comprehend?
- It helps if we read scripture at home on a regular basis.
 - The BAS contains daily office lectionary p 450-497
 - The BCP has a table of lessons on pages xvi to xlv
 - The Anglican Communion has a Cycle of Prayer at <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/resources/cycle-of-prayer.aspx>

Handout Review : The Ministry of Scripture Reading During Public Worship

- The appointed passage to be read on Sunday must also be read several times throughout the week and reflected upon.
- It's important to pray through the passage and recognize the Lord's presence within the words.
- It is important to read with understanding so that the listener may have a better opportunity to also understand what is being read.

Handout Review : The Ministry of Scripture Reading During Public Worship

- The Diocese of Montreal hosts a web-site that provides commentary on the Revised Common Lectionary (which is the lectionary we follow for our corporate worship together) and this may be found at

<http://montreal.anglican.org/comments/index.shtml>

- Pronunciation of difficult words need to be clarified.

<http://netministries.org/bbasics/bbwords.htm>

<http://biblespeak.org/>

Handout Review : The Ministry of Scripture Reading During Public Worship

- **Microphone use:** Become familiar with the microphone we will be using, identifying which position will pick up our voice the best
- **Movement:**
 - The liturgical ministers ought to move about the worship in a reverent manner.
 - Readers, when moving from their seat to the lectern ought to walk in a slow steady pace, pausing to acknowledge the altar.
 - The same movement is desired in reverse when returning to one's seat following the reading of the appointed passage.

Handout Review : The Ministry of Scripture Reading During Public Worship

- **In Position and Ready to Read:**

- The liturgy of our public worship together is meant to flow seamlessly from one act of worship to another.
- When one act of worship is completed, the next ought to follow without delay.
- We are each to ensure that we have marked our appointed scripture passage in the Lectern Bible at least 10 minutes before the worship is to begin. Be familiar with where to find the passage on the page.


Handout Review : The Ministry of Scripture Reading During Public Worship

- Holy Eucharist: The Book of Common Prayer
- Holy Eucharist: The Book of Alternative Services
- The Offices - Morning/Evening Prayer: The Book of Common Prayer

Handout Review : The Ministry of Scripture Reading During Public Worship

Introducing and Concluding the Appointed Scripture Passage:

- When introducing and concluding the reading/lesson, ensure that you look at the congregation.
 - We are communicating to them.
- Upon the conclusion of the reading/lesson, there ought to be a distinct pause and then the reader proclaims the concluding response as per the rubrics.

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- The reader needs to be aware of how the appointed scripture passage begins. For example, the appointed passage may begin with “If you love me,…” Someone is being quoted; however, the reader is left guessing who is speaking. It is appropriate to say, “Jesus said, ‘If you love me,…” for listening clarification.
 - Follow the formulas for introducing and concluding the scripture readings/lessons as per the rubrics (review handout *How a Reference Works*).

How a Reference Works

- First comes an **abbreviated** form of the title of the book.
- The **first figure** indicates the chapter, and the **second**, separated from the first by a full stop (sometimes a colon), indicates the verse. *Thus Gen. 2:4 denotes Genesis, chapter 2, verse 4.*
- A **hyphen** is used in indicating several chapters or verses. *Gen. 2-5 denotes Genesis, chapters 2 to 5 (inclusive); Gen. 2:4-8 denotes Genesis, chapter 2, verses 4 to 8 (inclusive).*
- A **semi-colon** separates two different references. *Gen. 2;5 denotes Genesis chapters 2 and 5.*
- A **comma** separates different verses in the same chapter. *Gen. 2:4,8,11 denotes verses 4, 8 and 11 of chapter 2.*

How a Reference Works

- An **f.** added to a figure indicates the following verse (**ff.** indicates an indeterminate number of subsequent verses). Thus *Gen. 2:4f.* denotes *Genesis chapter 2, verses 4 and 5.*
- Some verses are particularly long. If you want to indicate just part of the verse, you add **letters** to the numbers. Thus *Gen. 2:4a* denotes *the first part of Genesis chapter 2, verse 4.*
- Here is an example: *Gen. 2:4-6,8;3:5f.;4:1-6:8* denotes: *Genesis, chapter 2, verses 4 to 6(inclusive) and verse 8, then chapter 3, verses 5 and 6; chapter 4, verse 1 to chapter 6, verse 8.*

The Lectionary

- **The Lectionary** for Sundays and holy days is arranged in a three-year cycle. Year A always begins on the First Sunday of Advent in those years evenly divisible by three (1986, 1989, etc.).
- **Readings** are cited according to the versification of the Revised Standard Version translation.”

The Lectionary

- **The Lectionary is the selection of Scriptural readings.**
 - The Anglican Church of Canada uses the Revised Common Lectionary, an ecumenical attempt to give the major Christian denominations common readings Sunday by Sunday and on Holy Days.
 - As a general rule, on the major feast days of the Church's Year, from Advent to Epiphany and from Lent to Trinity Sunday, the three readings have been carefully selected to bring out the theme of the day.
 - Other days, called "Ordinary Time" (i.e. the Sundays after Epiphany and the Sundays after Pentecost) tend rather to follow "course readings" or blocks of Scripture that follow naturally through sections of the Old Testament, the Epistles or the Gospels.
(*Ref. A Handbook of THE FAITH for Anglicans, 1983, pg. 153*)


Practical Tips for Effective Scripture Reading

Use of the body

- Stand upright and with good posture.
- Take deep breaths to support reading, and breathe by expanding the diaphragm (not raising the shoulders).
- Some eye contact helps emphasize the personal nature of the act.

Practical Tips- Mechanics of Reading

- Practice aloud repeatedly.
- Enunciate clearly.
- Use sufficient volume to be heard comfortably by all hearers.
- Read slowly enough to allow attentiveness to details and time for the congregation to absorb and feel the impact of Scripture's weighty importance.

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- Read quickly enough to communicate the flow of thought and/or the movement of a narrative sequence.
 - Avoid stumbling, especially over words difficult to pronounce.
 - Leave space for natural pauses according to punctuation (comma, periods, semi-colons, etc.)

Rehearse the Reading by:


- Over-dramatizing the emotions expressed in the text
- Discovering the emotional high points of the text.



Emphasize what is most important by using:

- volume
- vocal inflection
- pace
- spacing

Practice the differences in meaning and impact when emphasizing different words.



When practicing, read from a copy that allows you to mark up the text with cues for reading.

Video

'Reading Scripture in Worship'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=18&v=Zoqu4Yw9jY>
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Practical Assignment

- Choose sections of the BCP and BAS liturgy and a bible passage. Following the steps you have learned read the passages aloud to someone
- Look up words you have difficulty pronouncing and practice saying them aloud. Use the *Bible Speak* website to listen to the pronunciation of difficult words <http://netministries.org/bbasics/bbwords.htm>
- or
- <http://biblespeak.org/>

Pause & Consider

Which key points will help you read more effectively in public and why?

Evaluations

Please complete the course evaluation at:

anglican.nb.ca/wp/layreaders/training/

Supplementary Resources - Books

- *Unleashing the Word* by Max McLean and Warren Bird
- *Devote Yourself to the Public Reading of Scripture* by Jeffrey Arthurs
- *Public Reading of Scripture: A Handbook* by Clayton J. Schmit
- *Captive to the Word of God: Engaging the Scriptures for Contemporary Theological Reflection* by Miroslav Volf

Website Resources

- *Helps for Reading Scripture in Worship* at <http://cardiphonia.org/2010/11/25/helps-for-reading-scripture-in-worship/>
- *How do I Pronounce it? A Bible Study Audio* at
- <http://netministries.org/bbasics/bbwords.htm>
- Or <http://biblespeak.org/>
- *Devoted to the Public Reading of Scripture* at <http://matthiasmedia.com/briefing/2011/03/devoted-to-the-public-reading-of-scripture/>

References

- Collins, Phil (2014). *Scripture Engagement through the Public Reading of Scripture*. [Online]. Available: <https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/scripture-engagement/public-reading-scripture/practice>. Access Date: June 18, 2015.
- Duffy, Claire (2013). *How to Read Aloud in Public from Speak for Yourself*. [Online]. Available: <http://speak-for-yourself.com/2013/08/05/how-to-read-aloud-in-public/>. Access Date: June 18, 2015.
- Farley, Mike (2011). ***Practical Tips for Effective Scripture Reading***. [Online]. Available: *Helps for Reading Scripture in Worship* at <http://cardiphonia.org/2010/11/25/helps-for-reading-scripture-in-worship/>. Access date: June 18, 2015.

References

- *The Ministry of Scripture reading During Public Worship*; Compiled by Archdeacon Cathy Laskey Diocese of Fredericton for general use.
- *How a Reference Works*; Compiled by Archdeacon Cathy Laskey Diocese of Fredericton for general use.