




How to be a Highly Effective Lector



Orientation

Immanuel Church on the Hill

Listener Appreciation



"Do not underestimate the congregation's appreciation of the lector who thoroughly and meticulously prepares his or her reading. They know that you have done this for them and they will be glad in their hearts, though they may not actually tell you or thank you personally."

- Denise C. Thompson
Lector Training & Development

Orientation Agenda



- Listener Appreciation
- Our Mission as a Lectoring Team
- Top Ten Commitments
- Going Deeper: Exploring Five “Best Practices”
- Developing Key Skills: Tips for Speaking Clearly
- Our Appreciation
- Works Consulted



Our Mission as a Lectoring Team

1. To support each other as we help facilitate a contemplative worship experience.
2. To set our egos aside and be present when we read.
3. To develop our private and public reading skills.
4. To grow individually as intentional readers of Scripture.



Top 10 Commitments

10. It's about God and His Word, never about me.
9. I will practice names, and proclaim them with confidence.
8. I will seek understanding as I prepare by exploring the context of my readings.
7. I will be familiar with my readings, having prayed and practiced them well before the service.



Top 10 Commitments (cont'd)

6. I will honor the community of faith in my posture and my prayerfulness.
5. I will proclaim the living Word with an urgent passion that is alive, not dead.
4. I will not seek affirmations or compliments, realizing all glory belong to God.



Top 10 Commitments (cont'd)

3. I will respect the ministry, only proclaiming the Word if prepared to do so.
2. I will support, uplift and pray for others who also seek and proclaim God's Word.
1. I will honor the opportunity to proclaim the Word and recognize the privilege.

*Adapted from "Lector's Ten Commandments"
by Elon University in Essential Tips for Lectors*



Going Deeper: Exploring “Best Practices”

The following slides are an adaptation of the “Best Practices” discovered when we researched what other successful lector ministries look like.



Five Best Practices for Lectors

1. Enjoy reading Scripture

- Enjoyment comes from understanding and practice.
- To read a passage of Scripture, we need to understand its meaning.
- Reading the sections before and after your chosen Scriptural passage will add to your understanding and enjoyment.
- The more you practice, the more you'll enjoy reading.



Five Best Practices for Lectors

2. Practice the way you read

- Stand up to practice; don't just read at your desk.
- Practice on at least two different days other than the Sunday you will read. During each practice, read the selection out loud at least two times.
- This means you'll read aloud the passage at least six times in practice, giving you confidence.



Five Best Practices for Lectors

3. Get feedback from others

- Practice in front of a mirror or use your cell phone camera to videotape yourself.
- Practice in front of your children or grandchildren. Children are honest critics.
- Ask yourself: how can I improve? Then change based on what you see and hear.



Five Best Practices for Lectors

4. Use eye contact when reading

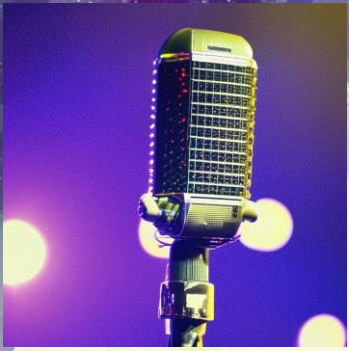
- Before reading, take a moment to look silently at the assembly.
- Embrace calm.
- Use eye contact on the
 - opening and closing sentences;
 - words and phrases that reveal key emotion.



Five Best Practices for Lectors

5. Project by enunciating

- Don't rely on the microphone.
- Projection comes from clearly articulated words.
Enunciate each word.
- If your words are clearly spoken, even a soft reading can be heard clearly.
- Speak clearly to the person in the back of the room.



Developing Key Skills: Tips for Reading Effectively

This section focuses on specific skills and practices we need to develop in order to improve our reading. During coaching sessions, your facilitators may refer to these.

Tips for

Reading

Prepare. Prepare. Prepare.

Effectively

1. Find out what you'll be reading early in the week so you can practice.
2. Learn and pronounce names correctly. Some of them are difficult.
3. Get to the service early. Warm up at the mic.
4. Know your space: don't trip on the stairs.
5. Before you begin, pause in silence and look out, making eye contact. It gets people's attention.

Prepare. Prepare. Prepare.



Tips for
Reading
Effectively

6. Be careful as you turn the pages of Scripture — you might find yourself reading another passage.
7. Enunciate. Speak to the person in the back row.
8. Use eye contact to bring personality to your reading.
If it helps, use your hand to move down the page, line by line. After eye contact, you can find your place.
9. Pause a split second at commas, a full second at periods, and two seconds at the end of a paragraph.

Tips for

Reading

Prepare. Prepare. Prepare.

Effectively

9. Breathe with your diaphragm. Vary tone and pitch:
 - High pitch: excitement, enthusiasm, surprise;
 - Low pitch: authority, confidence, seriousness;
 - Rising tones: questions;
 - Falling tones: statement or conclusion.
10. If you have technical questions about equipment, see Tamika. If you want personal coaching to read more fluently, reach out to Steven.

Listener Appreciation

*Thank you for the hard
work you put in behind
the scenes. We couldn't
do this without you!*



Works Consulted

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