

SIX O'CLOCK SERVICE

A SHORT GUIDE FOR READERS

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a reader for the evening service. Your partnership in this ministry is greatly appreciated. We have prepared this guide to help you get better acquainted with your responsibilities. *First and quite importantly, note that your responsibilities go well beyond merely reading.* Please feel free to ask the service coordinators if you have any questions or concerns. The responsibilities basically fall into four main categories: greeting, reading, taking the collection, and setting up for the Eucharist. Here are a few notes on each:

GREETING

We ask that you are in place and ready to begin welcoming individuals by 5:45pm, if possible. The primary thing to remember is that greeting is first, and foremost, an act of ministry. We encourage you to spend some time in prayer before you arrive and ask God to help you be welcoming and loving and to make good connections with people as they enter the church. This is the front line of ministry. A few additional notes:

- When you arrive, you will want to reserve a place for yourself in a position that is convenient for getting to the front of the church for the reading while at the same time keeping an eye on the door for any latecomers.
- Before the service begins, you will need to stand by the door, greet people as they enter, make sure they have the necessary service sheets, prayer book (*Common Worship*) and hymnal (*Ancient & Modern*). You should stay at the door until after the service has started in order to greet latecomers.
- Please be available to answer any questions.
- The people in charge of the food should have a church centre key if anyone needs to use the WC/bathroom during the service.

Greeters play a vital role in forming a visitor's first impression of our church and, for some, a visitor's first impression of the Christian faith. Please smile and greet people, making sure they feel welcome in the church.

READING

You should receive an email reminder during the week with the reading. You will want to practice the reading several times in advance, marking any places where pronunciation is difficult or transitions may cause you stumble. In preparation for reading, we ask that you also read and consider an article on the public reading of Scripture by Simon Roberts ("How to Read the Bible in Church"), which will be given to all readers. It will be helpful as you prepare. Here are a few additional thoughts:

- Christ Church uses the NRSV (*New Revised Standard Version*) of the Bible. The texts can be found at bible.oremus.org.
- If you have any questions about pronunciation, please feel free to contact the service coordinators for assistance.

- After the celebrant has prayed the Collect of the Day, make your way to the lectern in the sanctuary. You will be able to place your Bible or printout on the lectern. Make as much eye contact with the congregation as possible before and after your reading.
- While we do use a microphone, you will still need to project your voice. Practice before the service, if possible. It may feel that you are speaking loudly but you need to project your voice so that those in the back are able to hear. At the same time, be careful that your tone does not come across as harsh. This will come with practice over time. Ask someone for feedback.
- As the readings are written on the service sheet we do not quote the chapter and verse but read the heading as printed in the service sheet: “A reading from...”
- Following the reading you say: “This is the Word of the Lord.” The congregation responds with “Thanks be to God.”
- You may wish to make a small bow or nod of the head towards the altar as you arrive and leave the sanctuary.

TAKING THE COLLECTION & SETTING UP FOR THE EUCHARIST

After sharing the peace, the offertory hymn will begin. At this point you should take the collection bag (found at the back of the church on the left side of the book shelf) and collect the money starting at the front. Remember:

- You do not need to hand it to everyone. You should be able to tell if a person has something visually before you send the bag up the row.
- After you have reached the back, you will need to return to the front and present the pouch to one of the servers at the altar (who will collect it on a collection plate and present it for blessing at the altar).
- After you have presented the offering to one of the altar servers, you should retrieve the moveable communion rail (a plank of wood that bridges the entry to the chancel or altar area—it will most likely be propped up against the wall on the pulpit side of the front area) and place it across the gap, completing the communion rail.
- You should then move the additional kneeling cushion (which will be placed to one side) into the space in front of the communion rail, making it possible for people to kneel across the entire front.
- Finally, after the Eucharist is finished, there will be a communion hymn. During this hymn, move the kneeling cushion to one side and remove the moveable communion rail piece so that those in the chancel area (altar platform) may freely move into the nave (the rest of the church where the congregation is seated).

Thank you again for your willingness to serve in this way. Please let us know if you have any questions. We are grateful to be partnering in ministry with you.