



ALL SOULS EPISCOPAL PARISH BERKELEY CA

Customary for Lectors and Intercessors

Mission and Purpose

Lectors and intercessors make a crucial contribution to the life of our parish. Lectors don't read and intercessors don't intercess out of a love for public speaking (though they may, in fact, love public speaking!), but because they want to participate in the public proclaiming of the Word of God and because they want to offer up the prayers of the community from within the community. The worship of the gathered people of God is the time when the scriptures are made present for all to hear and for the prayers of the community to be named aloud, to resonate in space, and to reverberate in our collective hearts. It is countercultural today to hear stories read aloud to us. It is not common for us to publicly voice our deepest concerns. This is precisely why it is all the more important for us to engage in these ancient practices today, and to engage in them well, allowing them to shape us as they shaped our forebears in the faith, individually and as a body. This is both a great gift and a tremendous privilege.

Readers of the lessons and leaders of community prayer, therefore, play an essential role in our corporate worship. We understand these to be integral ministries in the life of All Souls Episcopal Parish. They are not lesser than other forms of ministry. They are of equal importance to them, being a component of the universal priesthood of all believers, to which all the people of God are ordained by virtue of their baptism.

Introduction and General Information

This customary is a practical guide to the protocols for reading the lessons and for leading the Prayers of the People at All Souls Episcopal Parish at the 7:30, 9:00, and 11:15 services.

When it is time to create a service rota, the Parish Office will contact you via email to ascertain your availability.

Once the rota is published, if you find you cannot serve on a day for which you are assigned, it is your responsibility to find a replacement. Once someone has agreed to take your place or to switch with you for a different date, inform both Emily Hansen Curran (emily@allsoulsparish.org) and the Parish Administrator of the change(s). Please do this by 3:00 p.m. no later than four days prior to the affected service (for

Sundays, this means 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday), so that the correct names appear in the bulletin and so the proper people can be informed by the parish office.

If an emergency arises and you need to make a last-minute change, email Emily and the Parish Administrator as above, but also copy Fr. Phil (phil@allsoulsparish.org) and Mo. Liz (liz@allsoulsparish.org), and have your replacement personally tell one of them no later than 15 minutes prior to the start of the service that they are standing in for you that day.

All lectors and intercessors should arrive at All Souls at least 15 minutes prior to worship. A copy of the rota is posted on the sacristy door. Find the entry for the day and check your name off so that the clergy know you are present. While there at the sacristy please check in with one of the clergy to see if there are any changes in the lections or in the prayers.

For Lectors

The Parish Office will send you by email a copy of your reading on the Thursday prior to your assigned service. Make sure to look over your text before arriving for worship. This will give you a chance to familiarize yourself with unusual words, names, or difficult sentence structures that could trip you up if you were to read it cold. Pro tip: the Bible Workbench program at All Souls can be helpful both for working through a reading for the upcoming week and for providing deeper engagement with scripture in general, both of which are very helpful in this ministry.

Before worship, please check the book of readings in the ambo to be sure it is open to the right page (i.e., to the first reading for the day) and that the second reading is properly bookmarked.

When moving to or from the ambo, reverence the altar if you pass through the crossing (where the main aisle terminates at the foot of the altar). For some that may mean a simple pause, for others a profound bow.

When you read, speak clearly and distinctly. While it is not a performance, please read with lively enough expression so that the meaning of the text is conveyed.

- Give people space to sit and settle into their places before you begin speaking, then announce the reading with the language printed in the book of readings and only that language. Each lection is preceded by a short introductory phrase. Please use what is printed there just as it appears when introducing the reading (e.g., “A Reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians”).
- Readers (First Readers at the 11:15 service) should be in position, waiting at the first pillar, by the start of the Collect of the Day. This means making your way there during the liturgical act just prior to the collect (e.g., the Song of Praise, Gloria, Trisagion, or Kyrie). At the 11:15 service, second readers fh

- Note that the conclusion to readings at All Souls is “Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people,” despite what is printed in the book of readings.

Special Notes for 7:30 Readers

- Please come forward to read after the Collect of the Day has been prayed.
- At the conclusion of the first reading, pause, then say: “Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.”
- Next, introduce the psalm with the words: “Let us read together Psalm _____ [if only part of a psalm, include “verses X through Y”], alternating verses, beginning on the presider’s side.”
- At the conclusion of the psalm, announce and read the second reading. Conclude with: “Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.”
- After the congregation’s response, return to your seat.

Special Notes for 9:00 Readers

- Readers should be in position, waiting at the first pillar, by the start of the Collect of the Day. This means making your way there during the liturgical act just prior to the collect (e.g., the Song of Praise, Gloria, Trisagion, or Kyrie).
- At the conclusion of the reading, pause, then say: “Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.”
- After the congregation’s response, return to your seat.

Special Notes for 11:15 Readers

- First readers should be in position, waiting at the first pillar, by the start of the Collect of the Day. This means making your way there during the liturgical act just prior to the collect (e.g., the Song of Praise, Gloria, Trisagion, or Kyrie).
- At the conclusion of the first reading, pause, then say: “Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.” After the congregation’s response, return to your seat.
- Second readers should be in place at the ambo by the time the psalm ends.
- Once the music stops, announce and read the second reading. Conclude with: “Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.” After the congregation’s response, return to your seat.

For Intercessors

- At the start of the Nicene Creed, please make your way to the back of the church near the baptismal font. Pick up the green book and either write the prayer concerns noted there into whatever document you will be reading the prayers from, or bring the green book itself to the ambo with you. Be in position at the first pillar by the end of the creed. Wait for the assisting minister to bid you to come up to the ambo.

- Once in place and the music has stopped, pray the prayers as they are written in the bulletin. Leave a substantial silence when inviting people to add their own prayers. Leave a briefer silence between stanzas in the prayers.
- If you have your own intercessions to offer, you are welcome to offer them in the place where, if you were in the congregation, you would do so. After you have bid the prayers from the people for that section, take a step back, away from the ambo and the microphone, offer up the prayers that are on your own heart, and then step back up to the ambo and the microphone in your role as prayer leader to continue. This ensures your personal prayers are not picked up by the microphone and therefore elevated over the community's prayers, and the added space distinguishes clearly when you are in the role of prayer leader and when you are an individual praying congregant. Leading the Prayers of the People is like serving as an embodied collect. The intercessor is an embodiment of the entire community and performs that ministry in a representational mode, not as an individual. The intercessor's role is, therefore, almost iconic, in that the congregation should be able to look *through* the intercessor to perceive the corporate body praying through her or him. This is why intercessors are asked to bid the prayers and then step back in order to offer personal concerns as an individual before coming back in to resume leadership through representing the whole body once more.
- At the conclusion of the Prayers of the People, remain in place while the presider offers the concluding collect. Return to your seat as the Confession or the Peace begins.

Thank you very much for your service and dedication.

The entire All Souls Parish community appreciates your ministry!

(Rev. 9/2019)