

Dear Scripture Reader,

We are pleased to have you (and your family) read Scripture during the corporate service of worship at Communion Presbyterian Church. Communion desires to reflect biblical worship that families can emulate in their homes; therefore, under the supervision of biblical “headship,” able family members are welcome to participate. *To ensure that all things are done decently and in order, all readers must be approved in advance by Session.*

In order to help maintain the proper atmosphere of reverence, and to assist you with your reading, the Session requests you observe the following guidelines:

- *Select an accurate and readable Bible translation.* Communion does not have an “official” English translation. So for the time being, you should bring a Bible of your own to read. Please limit your choice to any of the following widely-accepted, accurate translations: NASB, ESV, NKJV, NIV, KJV, or RSV.
- *Familiarize yourself with the passages beforehand.* Practice reading the passages aloud a few times as this will help you to read smoothly and clearly during worship and will enable the congregation to easily understand and follow along. Decide how you will pronounce difficult words and names so you won’t be surprised by them later. (Please contact a pastor for a preferred pronunciation of difficult names, places, ceremonies, etc., if needed.)
- *Children who read well are welcome, but need special guidance.* If your child will be reading, have him or her read the passage aloud to you several times, and help him or her with any pronunciation problems. A general rule for younger children is that *they should only read as many verses as is equal to their age.* If the Scripture readings are particularly long on the day your family reads, please just have a parent read.
- *Bookmark the passage.* Use the ribbons in your Bible (or some other means, such as a “post-it” tab) to bookmark the passages you will be reading. This will enable you to quickly locate the passages when you get to the lectern, rather than leafing through the pages.
- *When it’s your turn to read, conduct yourself with reverence and respect.* Remember our focus in worship is upon the authority of the Word. Therefore, we want it to be presented as *the very words of God* for His people, knowing that God’s Word has the power to transform lives. Additionally, here are some practical guidelines for readers:
  - Please dress appropriately.
  - As the preceding hymn concludes, please make your way to the lectern so you are prepared for the reading once the music is finished.
  - Because of theological convictions, not all families may wish to have a woman read; however, when a woman does come forward to read, she should be escorted to the chancel by her “covenantal authority.” \*
- *Simply Introduce the Passage to be read.* Communion’s liturgy proceeds largely “unannounced.” There is no need to say “good morning” to the congregation or engage in personal commentary. Simply state the Scripture reference and begin reading. In order to allow the congregation to locate the passage in their own Bibles, the following is recommended:

*“The reading from Old Testament Prophet is from the book of Amos, chapter nine, verses eight through fifteen.”*  
(Pause for several seconds to allow congregation to find the passage.) *“Amos, chapter nine, verses eight through fifteen.”* (Then begin to read...)
- *Speak clearly.* Remember to speak clearly and loudly and not too fast. It is appropriate to match the mood of the passage with suitable voice inflection; but, remember, this is a reading and not a dramatization.
- *Lead the congregation in responding with thanks for God’s Word.* We learn from Scripture that the worship of God is “dialogical”—in other words, God speaks and His people respond. Therefore, on most occasions, after reading the selected passage(s), you will lead the congregation in an appropriate response to the reading of God’s Word, as printed in the order of worship:

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

Congregation: **Thanks be to God.**

We hope these guidelines help you as you prepare to read God’s Word in the corporate service of worship at Communion Presbyterian Church. Again, we thank you for your service!

\* For further explanation of this concept, please speak with a Pastor or Elder.