Scripture Reader Guidelines
Hope United Church of Christ
Alexandria, VA
(Updated October 2019)

We are grateful that you are willing to serve as Scripture Reader for this coming Sunday. We believe it is an especially important ministry at Hope. In the gospel of John, we discover that in Jesus the “Word became flesh and lived among us” (John 1:14). God has called you, on this Sunday, to embody and speak that living Word once again. You are a prayerful presence in worship. We believe God called you and will be with you as read scripture. Please prayerfully prepare for Sunday.

For further information or questions, please contact Worship Coordinator Naomi Velluttini (naomi_velluttini@hopeucc.org) or the leader of the Worship Support Team.

If for any reason you are unable to fill your role on Sunday, please attempt to find a replacement and contact Naomi Velluttini or the leader of the Worship Support Team.

Before Sunday
You will receive an email on Friday with the scripture readings for the week. If there are any extra readings for the week, you will also receive a copy of Sunday’s bulletin by email. When you get it, please look up the Bible readings. Become familiar with the stories and passages. How do you personally connect with the scriptures? What might God be saying to Hope UCC through these passages? In prayer, ask God to be with you as you prepare to read. Be silent and know God is with you.

Sometimes, there are words in the scripture readings that are unfamiliar to you. If you don’t know how to pronounce the word, check online at http://netministries.org/Bbasics/BBwords.htm. You can hear how to say most of those tough Bible words.

Sunday Before Worship
On Sunday morning, please arrive by 10:10am. Check in with the technical support person to receive a microphone. Meet with others involved in worship in the church office. If the pastor is present, he or she will review the worship service and any details about the readings one more time. We will also spend a brief time in prayer.

During Worship
After the children leave the sanctuary for Expedition Hope, introduce yourself and say something like, “As we prepare to hear today’s scripture, let us center ourselves in prayer” and then read the Prayer of Preparation.

Introduce each reading for the day with simple words as “The reading from the Hebrew Scripture is from the prophet Isaiah” or “Our gospel reading this morning is from the book of Matthew.” Enjoy and authentically speak the words of scripture. Cherish the words – God is speaking again through these texts. Take your time and look up from time to time.

Occasionally, the scripture reading will include a responsive psalm. Ask the congregation to turn to the psalm at the back of the hymnal. Invite them to pray and sing the psalm responsively. State something like: “You are invited to read the indented portion in unison and sing the response where you see the letter R.” Then ask the pianist to lead the congregation in the response.

Conclude your reading by looking up at the congregation and saying the response printed in the Bulletin. Finally, ask the congregation to stand and sing the next hymn. Indicate the name of the hymn and where it can be found, stating “Please stand as you are able and join in the hymn __________ found in the black hymnal number ___.”