

Liturgical Assistants at HHO

Our Liturgical Assistants are licensed by the archbishop to lead prayer and praise services in our diocese. They are a vital part of our community at HHO and offer leadership at Weekly Worship each Sunday. As well as leading services, Liturgical Assistants also offer general leadership in our community, join our Ministry-Task groups in projects and generally support each person they encounter through prayer and encouragement. They are people of prayer and faithfulness, and we are grateful for their ministry alongside us.

The LA role in the service:

- They lead the community in prayer and help the service move from one mode to another E.g introducing music, inviting members to pray/read, guiding participants so they know what is happening and why
- An LA is a bit like an air traffic controller in a worship space – it is their job to make sure that all community members who are participating in worship (readers, intercessors, cantor, broadcaster etc.) feel confident and supported as they offer their ministries
- An LA can be called upon to lead services when clergy are not present
- An LA leads all aspects of the service except the intro to confession, absolution and blessing
- An LA holds the space for the people to come together and have a shared experience of God

Here are few things for a Liturgical Assistant to think about before leading worship:

- View the service slides ahead of time and practice leading out loud
- Make sure the rubrics (words on the screen in liturgical colour E.g. “Now we pray this prayer together...” E.g. “I now invite the reader to unmute and offer the lesson when ready”) suit your leadership style and edit accordingly – *it is better to say exactly what is on the screen rather than make it up on the spot, as it is more accessible for congregants who can’t hear clearly* –
- Pray for the service, everyone involved and for yourself as we prepare to gather in worship

Some tips for an LA at worship

- Make sure your audio and camera are correctly assigned in Zoom
- Join in ready to be at the Zoom for over an hour and a half (bathroom visit, drink of water handy, comfortable seating or space to join from)
- Breathe regularly down into your belly when leading, so that your voice is clear when you are projecting
- Go slow – leading likely feels slower to you, than it does to everyone else – so speaking slower is better!

Troubleshooting issues

Sometimes things go wrong with technology so helping the team to troubleshoot is a great idea.

When the welcomer hands over to you, you may need to wait for the broadcaster to get the share screen up and running – you can say something like:

- “While we are waiting for the screen share to arrive, welcome to worship everyone – my name is ____ and I will be leading this service with the help of the rest of the team today.” or
- “We will just wait for a moment while our broadcaster sets everything up for us – please send them some love/encouragement everyone – thanks ____ for broadcasting!”

If the sound doesn’t come through for the bells/organ or other music which we have at the welcome section, then let the broadcaster know when you are able to by unmuting and saying their name.

Broadcasters can’t see the chat box while they are in screen share, so you need to use your voice to catch their attention. You may need to wait until they have finished playing the video as they might not be able to hear you calling out to them if they have the video sound up.

You can then support them through these 3 steps:

1. Broadcaster – have you got the “Share sound” and “Optimize for video sharing” boxes ticked in the screen share menu?
2. Maybe hop out of the screen share and back in again/pop out of Zoom and back in again

3. If that still doesn't work – go to the backup broadcaster and ask them to share their screen

Hopefully these steps have resolved the issue and worship can recommence.

If a server can't unmute themselves (i.e. for reading or another role) you can invite the 'host' of the meeting to help them by 'inviting' them to unmute.

You can figure out who the host/co-hosts are by visiting the participants box (people button in your menu bar) and the title should be listed in brackets next to the people's names.

You may also need to invite members to mute themselves if they accidentally unmute and have sound coming through their device.

You can say something like:

- “And just pausing for a moment, ___ can you please mute yourself again, we seem to have some sound coming through from your device – thank you”

Host/co-hosts can also mute people – so if they can't do the buttons themselves you can ask the host/co-hosts to mute them for you.

Have a laugh with the community – tech gremlins can strike at any time, so it is part of our life together to troubleshoot when needed.

A prayer for liturgical assistants to pray before leading worship

Lord Jesus, just as you emptied yourself and put your own needs aside to care for us, so I ask your assistance as I seek to empty myself and care for others.

As I lead worship with all your children during our services, may they hear your voice and feel your presence through my ministry.

Please bless each of our servers as we bring worship together to pray and praise you.

Thank you for calling me to lead my community in this way.

Holy Spirit, please fill me with your love, warmth and compassion. Amen.