

Lectionary Notes

prepared by Lori Stewart for a CCS worship workshop, October 2013

What is a lectionary?

A lectionary is

- a collection of readings from the Scriptures, arranged for proclamation during the worship
- tables showing a schedule of readings which followed the church year were known and used in the fourth century
- Early forms involved continuous reading, with each Sunday's texts picking up where they left off on the previous Sunday.
- The practice of assigning particular readings to each Sunday (and festivals) has continued through the history of the Christian Church.

Most Recent History

1969 Roman Catholic Lectionary

1983 Common Lectionary

1992 Revised Common Lectionary

Types of lectionaries

Two basic forms:

1. *A simple table of readings*, which gives the liturgical day or date, and the Scripture references for the texts to be proclaimed. E.g. The Revised Common Lectionary <http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/> One to print out http://www.united-church.ca/files/planning/lectionary/lectionary_bulletins2013.pdf
2. *A full-text edition*, which prints the specific texts from a particular translation of the Bible. E.g. the Roman Catholic *Lectionary for Mass* <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/102713.cfm>

Why use a lectionary?

- To provide whole churches or denominations with a common pattern of biblical proclamation.
- As a guide for clergy, preachers, church members, musicians, and Sunday school teachers, to which texts are to be read on a given Sunday.
- As a guide for clergy from different local churches who wish to work together in a lectionary study group in preparation for worship.
- There are a number of ecumenical preaching aids, commentaries, Sunday school curricula, and other devotional aids based on the lectionary.
- As a guide to individuals and groups who wish to read, study, and pray the Bible in tune with the church's prayer and preaching.
- Some local churches print the references to the following Sunday's readings in their bulletins and encourage people to come prepared for the next week's celebration.
- It shows us the relationship of the readings of one Sunday with those that come before and after it.
- Within each of the major seasons of Lent, Easter, Advent, and Christmas-Epiphany, the flow of the season is reflected in all the Scripture texts, taken together as a set for each Sunday.
- To provide those who must plan ahead for worship—preachers, musicians, and graphic artists—with a rich resource well in advance so that those biblical motifs can find their way into hymns, anthems, banners, vestments, and paraments, as well as sermons.
- With the decline of biblical literacy among adults as well as young Christians, the return to a greater selection of readings from the Bible may be the most important gift. It provides a liturgical way to lead faithful followers of Jesus through his birth, baptism, ministry, death, and resurrection.

Critiques of the Lectionary

1. The way four readings of Scripture are artificially placed together for one day.
2. The place of women in the lectionary is not enough.
3. Sensitivity to the way some Scripture texts are heard by Christian congregations today.
4. It impedes the movement of the Spirit.
5. Sometimes there are occasions when the Lectionary readings do not fit.

Organization

The lectionary for Sundays and major festivals is arranged in a three-year cycle. The years are known as Year A - the year of Matthew; Year B - the year of Mark; and Year C - the year of Luke. John is read each year, especially in the times around Christmas, Lent, and Easter, and also in the year of Mark, whose gospel is shorter than the others.

Year C runs from December 1, 2012 to November 30, 2013. Year A starts on December 1, 2013.

Active Experimentation emphasizes the need to put into action our learning.

Learning is not just a matter of accumulating knowledge; it involves putting into practice that which we learn. [...] Like the author of James, intentionally working on naming areas for next steps or follow up in the AE section, encourages us to be “doers of the Word and not just hearers.” (James 1:22)

Concrete Experience upholds an incarnational theology.

Embodied spirituality and the practice of discipleship do not ask us to be removed and otherworldly. We are asked to live in the world, loving God and neighbour, in real and authentic ways. By reflecting on our experiences in the world, we can deepen and improve our ministries to and with others.

Abstract Conceptualization provides this kind of enriching and deepening opportunity [that links study and prayer].

By connecting to research, [...] to scripture and tradition and reason we have the possibility of growing and expanding our learning in ways that we may not have imagined by ourselves. It represents a communal commitment to learning; others are welcome to contribute to learning.

Reflective Observation encourages a prayerful attentiveness.

By slowly and deliberately, recalling a situation, we can contemplate its lessons. We can re-enter the circumstances with openness to discernment and wisdom-seeking. We can interrupt this culture’s patterns of busy-ness and over-booked schedules in order to notice, to attend, to listen.

Online Resources

Revised Common Lectionary

Background Introduction (download pdf)

http://www.commontexts.org/rcl/RCL_Introduction_Web.pdf

Chart of readings to print out

http://www.united-church.ca/files/planning/lectionary/lectionary_bulletins2013.pdf

Readings

http://www.united-church.ca/files/planning/lectionary/lectionary_bulletins2013.pdf

Central Resource

Textweek

<http://www.textweek.com/>

Re:worship

<http://re-worship.blogspot.ca/>

Lots of worship elements organized by lectionary and theme, variable theological approaches

Scripture

1. Oremus Bible Browser (NRSV)
<http://bible.oremus.org/>
2. Bible Gateway
<http://www.biblegateway.com/>
3. Vanderbilt Library
<http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/texts.php?id=285>
<http://montreal.anglican.org/comments/>
Scroll to bottom and click on Readings
4. Gathering (UCC)
<http://www.united-church.ca/planning/lectionary>
click on Gathering Lectionary, scroll to the date you want

What's going on in the News?

1. Sojourners Daily Digest
<http://blog.sojo.net/category/daily-news-digest/>
2. New Internationalist Blogs
<http://www.newint.org/blog/> See October 14
3. Christian Science Monitor
<http://www.csmonitor.com/>
4. CBC
<http://www.cbc.ca/>
5. The World in Prayer
<http://www.worldinprayer.org/>

Commentaries

1. Crossmarks
<http://www.crossmarks.com/brian/luke18x9.htm>
2. Anglican Church of Canada
<http://montreal.anglican.org/comments/>
(Scroll to the bottom and click on comments or clippings)
3. Bill Loader's Lectionary Resources
<http://wwwstaff.murdoch.edu.au/~loader/lectionaryindex.html>
4. Jan Richardson
<http://paintedprayerbook.com/>
5. David Ewart
<http://www.holytextures.com/>
6. Social Justice Lectionary site
<http://www.socialjusticelectionary.com/>
7. Wrestling with the Word
<http://wrestlingwiththewordfrm.wordpress.com/2010/10/>
8. Working Preacher
http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?lect_date=10/24/2010

9. Queer Theology
<http://www.queertheology.com/category/media/>
10. Out in Scripture
<http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/out-in-scripture>

Worship Preparation

1. UCC—Worship Planning by Theme
<http://www.united-church.ca/planning/theme#creation>
2. Seasons of the Spirit (must purchase clergy pack to use lectionary resources)
<http://www.seasonsonline.ca/>
3. Center for Progressive Christianity Liturgy Project (not lectionary)
http://www.tpc.org/template/page.cfm?page_id=113
4. GLTB friendly resources—not lectionary
http://www.mcccchurch.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Resources/Worship/Lent2008/Lent2008Introduction/Lent_08_Introduction.htm

Children's Time

1. Children's Literature: a resource for ministry
<http://storypath.wordpress.com/2010/10/08/lectionary-links-sunday-oct-24/>
2. Sermons4kids.com. *These stories are not great but sometimes you can get an idea that helps you write your own.*
3. Mustard Seeds usually has some ideas for stories or books to use
<http://seedstuff.blogspot.com/2010/10/proper-25-ordinary-30-pentecost-22-c.html>
4. Gathering
<http://www.united-church.ca/planning/lectionary>
Scroll down to Summer Autumn Issue and then to the page with the date you want
5. Worshipping with Children
<http://worshippingwithchildren.blogspot.com/2010/10/year-c-30th-sunday-of-ordinary-time.html>

Sermons

1. Michael Slaughter (not lectionary)
<http://ginghamsburg.org/sermon/>

Video

Video for Worship
<http://vimeo.com/groups/vfw>

Technology in worship

"Leading with Light" Worship 101:
http://www.leadingwithlight.com/2005/09/worship_101.html#more

Hymns

LicenSingOnline.org

How to use

<http://content.ocp.org/shared/pdf/general/LSO-how-to.pdf>

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