

**“Hear the Word of the Lord”.** The public reading of the Holy Scriptures during the liturgy of the Eucharist is a ministry of the highest importance. The Word, spoken and heard during services of worship, inscribes itself indelibly on our hearts and in our memories. We will continue to give training and encouragement to all who are entrusted with this ministry here at St Michael’s.

Revisions of Prayer Books and new translations of the Bible are published in order that the language of the Church’s worship may remain relevant for the times. In an age where the historical subservience of women to men has become so topical, offensive and damaging, we Christians need to look carefully at the (often unconscious) manner in which the language of worship perpetuates this injustice. It is for this reason that “gender neutral” translations of scripture are increasingly being taken into service in congregational worship.

St Michael’s has begun using the “New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)” at public worship. Here is a well known passage as translated in the NRSV: *“I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die”.* (John 11:25) By comparing this with the translation you may be using, you will see the small, but hugely meaningful, shift in emphasis. This change is to be found in countless passages in both New and Old Testaments (particularly in the Psalms). As our grandparents grew up knowing the words of the old Prayer Book and the King James Version, so we want the children of the Church to learn, and learn to love, the Word of God as expressed in language both beautiful and meaningful for their time and ours.

You can find information about the NRSV Bible on the Internet, and the Parish Office will assist you in obtaining your own copy, should you so wish.