

FORMATION GUIDELINES

For

LICENSED LAY MINISTRIES

Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe

The Episcopal Church (USA)

FEBRUARY 1, 2010

This document complements the *Handbook of the Commission on Ministry of the Baptized* of the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe.

The six lay ministries licensed by the Episcopal Church are: Pastoral Leader, Worship Leader, Preacher, Catechist, Eucharistic Minister, and Eucharistic Visitor. All six ministries are supported in the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe.

Reference: Title III: Ministry, Canons of The Episcopal Church

CANON 4: Of Licensed Ministries

According to the baptismal covenant, all are called to a life of faithfulness, worship, service, and ministry. Within this context, some have special gifts and abilities to lead God's people and equip them for their work of ministry. Such persons should be recognized and trained so that their particular ministries may be an effective witness to the risen Christ in our midst.

Licensed ministries are diocesan-level ministries that provide recognition of special gifts and training, provide standardization and accountability when the church is at worship, and support other ministries. We note in the early church that Paul did not make major policy

decisions on his own but, in the case of admitting Gentile believers into the fellowship of the church, he presented his case to the church elders and apostles in Jerusalem (Acts 15). As one who had comprehensive understanding of the church, we find him correcting some of the excesses in the Corinthian congregation (I Cor.: 14). It is in community that we discern how the Spirit is leading us. Those who have leadership positions are part of the community and subject to its direction. Ones so licensed act within the parameters of the Book of Common Prayer and within the faith and tradition of the Episcopal Church.

Some desirable characteristics of those who are to exercise the ministries listed in this canon include: a willingness to learn and grow in their faith and in the exercise of their particular ministry; a commitment to their appointed duties and responsibilities; a desire to enhance their ministry through continuing education and regular assessment; and the ability to work with and for others. Persons recommended for licensing should be doing their best to pattern their lives in accordance with Christ's teachings and be wholesome examples to the people of God.³

CANON 4: Of Licensed Ministries

Resource: The Bishop for Federal Ministries (Military, Hospital, and Prison Chaplaincies): <http://www.ecusa-chaplain.org>

Sec. 2.

(a) The Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith may request the Ecclesiastical Authority with jurisdiction to license persons within that congregation or other community of faith to exercise such ministries. The license shall be issued for a period of time to be determined under Canon III.4.1(a) and may be renewed. The license may be revoked by the Ecclesiastical Authority upon request of or upon notice to the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.

Reasons for revoking a license include but are not limited to failure to carry out the licensed ministry, preaching or teaching contrary to the established doctrine of the Episcopal Church and a manner of life that is causing scandal within a congregation.

(b) In renewing the license, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall consider the performance of the ministry by the person licensed, continuing education in the licensed area, and the endorsement of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith in which the person is serving.

(c) A person licensed in any Diocese under the provisions of this Canon may serve in another congregation or other community of faith in the same or another Diocese only at the invitation of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight, and with the consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority in whose jurisdiction the service will occur.

Qualities required for all Licensed Lay Ministries

Licensed Lay Ministers (LLM) should be committed Christians devoted to a simple rule of life, engage in daily prayer, receive communion on a regular basis, and commit to responsible stewardship.

Acceptance

The acceptance process for LLMs requires discernment. There should be a formal endorsement by person's faith community. As LLMs operate locally, for ministries requiring coursework, funding should be found locally i.e. through fundraising by the rector and by the congregation that endorses the person's ministry.

Language

Regarding language proficiency, the candidate should be conversant in English by the end of formation. At this time materials in other languages, other than the Convocation's *Bilingual Selections of the Book of Common Prayer*, are scarce.

Term of Ministry

In the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe, the Bishop licenses Eucharistic Ministers and Eucharistic Visitors for a period of two years, renewable upon review and authorization by the Bishop. Renewal is not automatic. License is accorded after the appropriate formation has been completed. Formation for these two ministries is performed at the parish level by the parish priest.

The term of license for the other four ministries (Pastoral Leader, Catechist, Worship Leader and Preacher) is three years with the same regular review process. License is accorded after the appropriate formation has been completed. Formation for these four ministries takes place both at the parish level and by the completion of several online courses at approved theological training centers, to be described below.

Required Courses

The three ministries of Pastoral Leader, Preacher, and Catechist require the completion of six courses. They are: Old Testament Introduction, New Testament Introduction, The Creeds, Christian Ethics, Church History & Theology, and Anglican Spiritual Practices.

For the ministry of Worship Leader three of these courses are required. They are: Old Testament Introduction, New Testament Introduction, and The Creeds.

Training Institutions

Courses in Christian Ethics, Old Testament, New Testament, and Creeds can be taken at a local Christian formation institution in the local language, if available. In English, these courses should be taken as distance courses from *Saint John's University, Nottingham, England*, Extension Studies Department.

EICS recommends that the Episcopal/Anglican Courses in Church History and Anglican Spiritual Practices be taken through the Church Divinity School of the Pacific's Center for Anglican Learning & Leadership.

All persons training for a Licensed Lay Ministry should be assigned a Mentor, usually the priest in charge, to work closely with the candidate.

For the four ministries requiring coursework, additional courses may be required as identified by the mentor with the candidate.

Continuing Education

Once licensed, continuing education is highly recommended for all ministries including: readings from a recommended reading list, attendance at seminars given by our Academy for Parish Leadership when relevant, relevant courses offered by outside institutions.

APPROVED TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

Saint John's Nottingham Extension Studies Department (www.stjohns-nottm.ac.uk) (SJN)

The Church of England Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe also uses this institution for their lay training programs. The following courses are appropriate for licensed lay ministries in the Convocation:

Old Testament Introduction

New Testament Introduction

The Creeds

Christian Ethics

Church Divinity School of the Pacific (www.cdsp.edu) (CDSP)

CDSP Center for Anglican Learning & Leadership (CALL) is an Episcopal seminary with an extensive distance-learning program. The following courses are appropriate for our licensed lay ministries:

Early Church History and Theology

Anglican Spiritual Practices

Introduction to Pastoral Care & Theology

and others as recommended for specific candidates

Following is a table that summarizes the formation requirements for each of the licensed lay ministries.

SUMMARY OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS BY MINISTRY

			MINISTRY			
	Pastoral Leader	Preacher	Catechist	Worship Leader	Eucharistic Minister	Eucharistic Visitor
<i>St Johns Nottingham:</i>						
Old Testament	X	X	X	X		
New Testament	X	X	X	X		
Creeds	X	X	X	X		
Christian Ethics	X	X	X			
<i>CDSP (CALL):</i>						
Church History	X	X	X			
Anglican Spiritual Practices	X	X	X			
Local Formation	X	X	X	X	X	X
Instruction Homiletics	X	X				

local level						
Mentor Required	X	X	X	X	X	X

FORMATION CODES:

The codes beside the educational topics below indicate where formation takes place:

L = Formation in the Local Parish under the Priest in Charge or Delegate

SJN = Saint John's Nottingham online course

CDSP = Church Divinity School of the Pacific online course

Sec. 3. Pastoral Leader. When the services of a priest are not available on a long-term, consistent basis, or in the context of team ministry, it may be appropriate to license a Pastoral Leader. This license tends to be issued in very limited circumstances.

Educational topics may include

- Holy Scripture **SJN**
- The Book of Common Prayer and the Hymnal **CDSP**
- Conduct of Worship **L**
- Use of Voice **L**
- Church History **SJN**
- Doctrine as Found in the Creeds and the Catechism **SJN**
- Parish Administration **L**
- Appropriate Canons **L**
- Pastoral Care. **L**

For the ministry of Pastoral Leader, added instruction and practice in Homiletics is required. This must be worked out with the mentor and will involve evaluation.

Sec. 4. A Worship Leader is a layperson who regularly leads public worship under the direction of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith. Examples of ministry: leading the offices of Morning and Evening Prayer.

Worship is integral to what we do as Episcopalians. Those licensed in this area need to be trained well enough so that the services they conduct enhance worship rather than detract from it. The key word in this section is “regularly.” Occasional conduct of worship does not require a license.

Other than licensed Lay Preachers, all persons regularly leading worship must use homilies prepared for them, unless specific permission from the Bishop has been secured in advance. An occasional address by a layperson does not require such permission, but must have the permission of the Member of Clergy in Charge and be done under the close oversight of the same.

The ministry of Worship Leader requires a deeply informed commitment to Christ. Formation involves completion of three online courses as described in the formation grid as well as significant formation and formal training (not ad hoc) under the supervision of the parish priest. In exceptional cases under specific circumstances, the course requirements may be waived after consultation with the Bishop. In this case, the training program would be agreed with the Bishop and priest in charge.

Licensed Worship Leaders shall have received training as Eucharistic Ministers as well, and their license includes permission to function as same.

Educational guidelines used by some dioceses:

- Liturgy with Emphasis on the Book of Common Prayer and the Hymnal - **L**

- Familiarity with and Ability to Use the Lectionary
 - Knowledge of the Church Year and How It Is Observed
 - Copyright Law
 - Rubrics
- Conduct of Worship **L**
 - Use of Voice **L**
 - Worship Canons (Title II) - Local or Convocation Seminar (Bishop's seminar)
 - Episcopal Worship and Its Meaning for the Life and Work of the Church. **L**

Resources:

Richard Giles, *Creating Uncommon Worship* (Liturgical Press, 2005)

Leonel Mitchell, *Praying Shapes Believing* (Morehouse Publishing, 1991)

Sec. 5. A Preacher is a layperson authorized to preach. Persons so authorized shall only preach in congregations under the direction of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.

This crucial ministry is the authoritative interpretation of the Scriptures—normally of the lections provided by the Book of Common Prayer—and therefore is a fundamental aspect of the proclamation of the Gospel and teaching of the Faith that is the work of every Christian worshipping community, large or small.

Those in authority to do so must issue the invitation to the Lay Preacher. Many ministry teams have individuals designated as preachers. They need to be licensed if they regularly preach. A licensed Lay Preacher cannot replace the ministry of the Word entrusted by the Church in Holy Orders to the Member of the Clergy in charge, who is

solely authorized by the Bishop to proclaim the Word and administer the Sacraments in that worshipping community.

Educational topics used by some dioceses:

- Holy Scripture and How It Is interpreted in the Episcopal Tradition **L**
- Methods of Exegesis **L**
- The Book of Common Prayer and the Hymnal **CDSP**
- Conduct of Worship **L**
- Use of Voice **L**
- Church History **CDSP**
- Christian Ethics and Moral Theology **SJN**
- Doctrine as Found in the Creeds and the Catechism **SJN**
- Pastoral Care **L**
- Homiletics (including review and critique of great sermons) **L**
 - the ability to preach to different audiences (children, youth, adult, elderly), formal and informal
 - relating Scripture to the contemporary world
 - effective use of story, illustration, and humor

Instruction and practice in Homiletics is organized in conjunction with the mentor and would involve skill evaluation.

Sec. 6. A Eucharistic Minister is a layperson authorized to administer the Consecrated Elements at a Celebration of Holy Eucharist. A Eucharistic Minister act under the direction of a Deacon, if any, or otherwise, the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith. Special training in Convocation guidelines for communion during times of epidemic must be reviewed and implemented.

Above all, this ministry is the Gospel proclamation to the communicant that the Eucharistic elements are the Body and Blood of Christ, the bread of heaven and the cup of salvation.

The Bishop licenses Eucharistic Ministers and Eucharistic Visitors for 2-year terms.

Eucharistic Minister would receive instruction delivered by the resident priest. Focus is not just on the method of administration but also on the meaning. The Bishop licenses them for two years. Renewal is not automatic and is subject to the evaluation and renewal by the Bishop.

Educational topics may include:

LOCAL FORMATION

- History of Eucharistic Ministry
- Eucharistic Theology
- Familiarity with the Eucharistic Liturgy
- Methods of Administration of the Sacrament
- Personal Preparation

Sec. 7. A Eucharistic Visitor is a layperson authorized to take the Consecrated Elements in a timely manner following a Celebration of Holy Eucharist to members of the congregation who, by reason of illness or infirmity, were unable to be present at the Celebration. A Eucharistic Visitor should normally act under the direction and work closely with the Deacon, if any, or otherwise, the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.

This category was separated from the Eucharistic Minister license under the old canon. Since Eucharistic Visitors will be interacting with parishioners on a one-on-one basis in private settings in many cases, guidelines for the avoidance of sexual misconduct need to be stressed and education in pastoral care needs to be provided.

Educational topics may include:

LOCAL FORMATION

- History of Eucharistic Ministry
- Eucharistic Theology, including the Reserved Sacrament
- Various Methods of Receiving the Sacrament
- Reverent Disposal of the Elements
- Pastoral Care, including Listening Skills and Confidentiality and the Knowledge of When and How to Report Pastoral Needs
- Reporting and Recording Visits
- Personal Preparation
- Practice of Ministry in Various Settings: Homes, Care Facilities, Hospitals, and Prisons

- Training in the Prevention of Sexual Misconduct

Resources

“Communion Under Special Circumstances,” *Book of Common Prayer*, pp. 396-399

Diocese of Central Florida: <http://www.cfdiocese.org>, Guidelines for Licensed Lay Ministries in the Diocese of Central Florida

Sec. 8. A **Catechist** is a layperson authorized to prepare persons for Baptism, Confirmation, Reception, and the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows, as well as teach children and adults and design and oversee programs of Christian education for them. They shall function under the direction of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith. Overall responsibility for Christian education in the congregation rests in the hands of the Rector, Priest-in-charge, Vicar or Pastoral Leader (Canon III.9.5(b))

Educational topics may include:

- Holy Scripture (knowledge of the historical outline and content of the Old and New Testaments) **SJN**
- The Book of Common Prayer (especially the Catechism and Rites of Initiation) and the Hymnal **CDSP**
- Familiarity with the Baptismal Policy of the Local Church **L**
- Church History: Early Church, Development of the Creeds, General Development of Christian Theology **CDSP**

- Doctrine as Found in the Creeds and the Catechism **SJN**
- General Knowledge of the Canons, Polity, Structure, and Decision-Making Processes in the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion. **CDSP**
- Methods of Catechesis **L**

Useful Resources for Licensed Lay Ministries:

Marion J. Hatchett, *Commentary on the American Prayer Book*, 1980.

“Commissioning Lay Ministries in the Church” *The Book of Occasional Services*, p. 179.

Diocese of East Tennessee: <http://www.etchiocese.net>, Diocesan Ministry, Shared Ministry, Update on Licensed Ministry, *Licensed Ministry Notebook* (Diocese of East Tennessee, 2005)

Diocese of Georgia: <http://www.georgia.anglican.org>, “Licensed Lay Ministry Training”

Diocese of Iowa: <http://www.iowaepiscopal.org>

Diocese of Kansas: <http://www.episcopal-ks.org>

Diocese of Louisiana: <http://www.edola.org>, Administration and Staff, Ministry Lay and Ordained

Diocese of Minnesota <http://www.episcopalmn.org>, Governance, Commission on Ministry

Diocese of Missouri: <http://www.missouri.anglican.org>, *Licensed Ministries in the Diocese of Missouri* (2005)

Diocese of Montana: Home, Links, Ministries Manual <http://mtepiscopal.homestead.com>

Diocese of Newark: <http://www.dioceseofnewark.org>

Diocese of Ohio: <http://www.dohio.org>

Diocese of South Dakota: <http://www.diocesesd.org>, What We Do, Ministry Handbook

Diocese of Washington: <http://www.edow.org>, Governance, Licensing