

CANON III.4 OF LICENSED MINISTRIES

Currently Under Revision

Selection and license

Sec. 1 (a) A confirmed communicant in good standing or, in extraordinary circumstances, subject to guidelines established by the Bishop, a communicant in good standing, may be licensed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to serve as Pastoral Leader, Worship Leader, Preacher, Eucharistic Minister, Eucharistic Visitor, Evangelist, or Catechist. Requirements and guidelines for the selection, training, continuing education, and deployment of such persons, and the duration of licenses shall be established by the Bishop in consultation with the Commission on Ministry.

Sec. 3 A **Pastoral Leader** is a lay person authorized to exercise pastoral or administrative responsibility in a congregation under special circumstances, as defined by the Bishop.

Sec. 4 A **Worship Leader** is a lay person 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.

Sec. 5 A **Preacher** is a lay person 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.

Sec. 6 A **Eucharistic Minister** is a lay person authorized to administer the Consecrated Elements at a Celebration of Holy Eucharist. A Eucharistic Minister should normally 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.

Sec. 7 A **Eucharistic Visitor** is a lay person 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 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.

Sec. 8 A **Catechist** is a lay person authorized to prepare persons for Baptism, Confirmation, Reception, and the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows, and shall function under the direction of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.

Sec. 9 An **Evangelist** is a lay person who presents the good news of Jesus Christ in such a way that people are led to receive Christ as Savior and follow Christ as Lord in the fellowship of the Church. An Evangelist assists with the community's ministry of evangelism in partnership with the Presbyter or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation, or as directed by the Bishop.

More on Eucharistic Visitor

The purpose of this license and the ministry that it intends is to include in the Eucharistic assembly those who, by reason of illness or infirmity, are unable to attend.

The administration of home or private communions by a Lay Eucharistic Visitor should be an extension of the principal Eucharist in a congregation. Those receiving their communions in this fashion should be included in congregational prayers and the assembled community should see the Lay Eucharistic Visitor receive the sacrament at the altar and go forth from the congregation.

Selection of Persons: Clergy should recruit persons for this ministry with the advice of their vestry or a church committee. It should be stressed, in discussing this with persons so recruited, that this is not a lifetime privilege or license.

Training: Those recommended for licensure should be carefully trained in the areas of functional, spiritual and pastoral aspects of this ministry.

Functional Training: A careful study of the canon, the guidelines, and the rite of Communion under Special Circumstances, should be carried out by all concerned. It might be well for those being trained to actually observe the priest, or others, in the performance of this ministry. It is necessary to use appropriate vessels to carry the sacrament from the altar. Consecrated elements left over should either be consumed or returned immediately to the church in their appropriate containers.

Spiritual: Careful instruction in the meaning and centrality of the Holy Eucharist should be undertaken, with appropriate support from Scripture. The communal character of the church should also be given careful attention.

Pastoral: Careful instruction should be given about the particular needs and problems of the aged, ill and infirm members of the congregation. It is envisioned that a degree of continuity should be strived for in this ministry, so that a predictable pattern of ministry might come to be expected by the persons receiving the sacrament, whether on a weekly, bi-monthly, or monthly basis.

Supervision: If there is a deacon in the congregation, this would normally be the deacon's responsibility. But, in the absence of a deacon, the priest is responsible for supervising and directing this ministry of those persons so licensed.

Licensing and Commissioning: It would be appropriate to commission those persons who are to be licensed to this ministry during the next scheduled Episcopal visitation. Please describe the training the person has received when submitting a letter of recommendation.

Term of Service: A term of service would not exceed three years, and could be for a shorter time.

Resources: The canon itself and the Book of Common Prayer are helpful. In addition, the diocesan office of Christian Learning has additional resources available for use. The ministry envisioned here is a serious and demanding one, which should not be undertaken unadvisedly or lightly by either lay people or clergy.

1. Lay Eucharistic Visitors must be adult confirmed communicants in good standing, be carefully chosen and trained, and be specially licensed. A candidate is to be recommended by the cleric in charge of the congregation to the Bishop.
2. Where a deacon serves in a congregation, that minister should supervise the work of the Lay Eucharistic Visitor.
3. It is recommended that those receiving communion from a Lay Eucharistic Visitor be prayed for specifically in the Prayers of the People by the congregation on that day.
4. The administration of the Sacrament to the persons visited should take place immediately after the service in the church. Following the communion of the people, the Lay Eucharistic Visitor comes forward and is discharged with the following or similar words:

**In the name of this congregation,
I send you forth bearing these holy gifts,
that those to whom you go may share with us
in the Communion of Christ's body and blood.
We who are many are one body, because we
all share one bread, one cup.**

5. A suitable container in which to carry the two vessels for the bread and wine, corporals, and purificators is to be supplied. The container is to be returned immediately to the parish along with any unconsumed elements.
6. The people to whom Holy Communion is to be administered are to be notified in advance and the time of the appointment clearly set.
7. The order of the Book of Common Prayer rite "Communion under Special Circumstances", amended as appropriate, is to be used.

Concerning the Rite. The Book of Common Prayer affirms the place of the Holy Eucharist as "the principal act of Christian worship on the

Lord's Day and other major Feasts," and thus the foundation of the corporate prayer of the church. As an act of the whole community of faith, the Eucharist is a summons to all the baptized to share in the table of the Lord. This form for the distribution of Holy Communion by licensed lay persons is intended to foster a corporate sense of the Eucharist among those who, by reason of illness or infirmity, are unable to be present on Sunday or some other principal feast.

This service is to be conducted by a duly licensed person immediately following such celebrations of the Holy Eucharist. The General Convention (1985) has specified that "The functions of the Lay Eucharistic Visitor shall be limited to the following:

- a) Administering the elements at any Celebration of Holy Eucharist in the absence of a sufficient number of Priests or Deacons assisting the celebrant;
- b) Directly following a Celebration of Holy Eucharist on Sunday or other Principal Celebrations, taking the Sacrament consecrated at the Celebration to members of the Congregation who, by reason of illness or infirmity, were unable to be present at the Celebration.

It is desirable that other parishioners, relatives, and friends also be present to communicate with the person visited. Those so ministered to should also be visited regularly by the clergy of the congregation. In this way, those who are unable to participate regularly in the worship of the Eucharistic assembly may nevertheless experience their relation to the community and also join their personal faith and witness to that of their community. It is appropriate that the person be invited to join in commenting on the Scripture and in offering suitable prayers during the rite.

**Distribution of Holy Communion
by Lay Eucharistic Visitors
to Persons Who Are Ill or Infirm**

This form is to be used only immediately after the principal Eucharist on Sunday or other Principal Celebrations. The Lay Eucharistic Visitor should be accompanied by other persons from the congregation.

The Lay Eucharistic Visitor greets the people

The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

Response

And also with you.

Collect of the Day

Gospel of the Day, or some other passage of Scripture appropriate to the occasion.

Comments may be made about the sermon of that day.

Suitable prayers may be offered.

A Confession of Sin may be said:

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Lay Eucharistic Visitor May Almighty God in mercy receive our confession of sorrow and of faith, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. AMEN.

The Lord's Prayer

Administration of the Holy Communion
(Using of the authorized words of administration)

Closing Prayer: O gracious God, whose Christ stretched out arms of love upon the hard wood of the cross to embrace all the peoples of the earth: We give you thanks for feeding N. our sister with the Sacrament of that precious Body and Blood, which is the sign and instrument of our common life, and also for enriching our parish family by her sharing with us the food of our pilgrimage, the foretaste of that heavenly banquet of which we shall partake with all your saints; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. AMEN.

Lay Eucharistic Visitor Let us bless the Lord.
Response Thanks be to God.

LICENSED LAY MINISTRY APPLICATION—PAGE 1

For Pastoral Leader, Worship Leader, Preacher, Eucharistic Minister, Eucharistic Visitor, Catechist or Evangelist. Please fill out a separate form for each ministry license for which you are applying. This form must be endorsed and submitted by the Priest in Charge or if no Priest is present by the Congregation.

Name of person to be licensed (please print _____)

Home Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Congregation _____

Today's Date _____

To the Bishop of Alaska:

I wish to be licensed as a _____. On the reverse side of this form I have written why I am seeking this office, training I have received, and activities in preparation for being licensed. I have been regular in attendance at worship and in receiving the Holy Communion. I support the work of the church by regular giving.

(The following information required by Title III, Canon 3.)

Birthdate _____ Date and place of Baptism _____

Date and place of Confirmation _____

Signature of applicant _____

ENDORSEMENT BY PRIEST-IN-CHARGE:

I request that _____ be licensed as a _____ and I agree to supervise him/her in that office.

Date _____ Signed _____ Title _____

OR

ENDORSEMENT BY CONGREGATION:

At a meeting of the congregation, or of the Vestry or Church Committee, the application of _____ to become a licensed _____ in _____ Church was approved.

Date _____ Signed _____ Title _____

I want to be a licensed Lay Minister because:

LICENSED LAY MINISTRY APPLICATION—PAGE 2

I have received the following training:

My continuing education will include:

LICENSED LAY MINISTRIES RENEWAL APPLICATION—PAGE 1

For Pastoral Leader, Worship Leader, Preacher, Eucharistic Minister, Eucharistic Visitor, Catechist or Evangelist. Please fill out a separate form for each ministry license for which you are applying. This form must be endorsed and submitted by the Priest in Charge or if no Priest is present by the Congregation.

Dear Bishop:

In accordance with Title III Canon 3, Sec. 2b, I submit this Renewal Application for _____

During the last three years I have:

1. Performed my ministry in the following ways: _____

2. Studied the following materials:

3. Attended continuing education sessions on: _____

Signed by Licensed Lay Minister

Date

Home Address of Lay Minister

City/State/Zip

Church Endorsement: I endorse the renewal of the license of _____ to serve in the above named lay ministry in _____ Episcopal Church.

Comments: _____

Signed: Sr. Warden, Priest or Deacon of the congregation