



8/1/2024

Dear Clergy of the diocese and those seeking licensure as Lay Ministers,

In its canons, the Episcopal Church provides for seven distinct licensed lay ministries to be exercised for the vitality of our faith communities and for the spreading of the Good News of Jesus Christ. These ministries include Eucharistic Minister, Eucharistic Visitor, Preacher, Worship Leader, Evangelist, Pastoral Leader, and Catechist. (Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church Title III. Canon 4 Sec. 1-9). The Commission on Ministry in each diocese is charged to work with the bishop to provide a means of discerning and equipping those who have gifts for ministry.

Currently in our Diocese of Central Pennsylvania, 57% (35) of our parishes employ clergy on a part-time basis and another 13% (8) of our churches are in transition or work with supply clergy on a week-to-week basis. Many of our churches are not able to receive Holy Communion on a weekly basis and instead, use the office of Morning Prayer to worship on one or two Sundays per month.

There are three important reasons that our Commission on Ministry has created a path for Lay Licensing: 1) we have a responsibility to our parishioners to equip and support them as they take on vital ministerial roles in parishes where clergy are not always present 2) we hope to honor the gifts of all -including those who are called to serve in leadership roles but who are not called to ordination 3) the structure of our church invites the administration of this process.

The process that we have developed is explained in the documents in this packet. It recognizes that formation for these roles can take a variety of paths, including academic training through our Stevenson School for Ministry, local training with one's parish priest or a priest in a neighboring church, and/or coursework and practical training through other online schools. The successful completion of a training program, however, does not necessarily signal readiness for ministry, and so a Checklist of Competencies for each position has been developed. Working with one's parish priest or sponsoring clergy person (Clergy Convenor or nearby priest in another parish), each applicant is expected to meet

the competencies as described and have their sponsoring priest attest to their readiness to serve.

The first letter of Peter says, “As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace” (I Peter 4:10). It is our hope that this Pathway to Licensed Lay Ministry will encourage and support those in our diocese who are called to give of their time and talent for the life of the church.

With this letter, we are releasing the Pathways for Licensing as Eucharistic Ministers, Eucharistic Visitors, Preachers, and Worship Leaders to take effect September 1, 2024. Those already licensed do not need to re-apply for their licenses until their current three-year license is due for renewal. We hope to develop competencies for the other lay ministries in the months to come.

Know of our appreciation for all who serve God in the church as we share God’s message of love and healing.

In the Way of Love,

+Audrey

The Rt. Rev. Audrey C. Scanlan, XI Bishop and COM President

The Commission on Ministry

The Rev. Dr. Richard C. Bauer

The Rev. John T. Harwood

The Rev. Barbara Hutchinson (Co-Vice President)

The Rev. James Jenkins, Deacon

The Rev. Amanda Knouse

Mr. Harold William Lord

The Ven. Jane Miron, Archdeacon for Deacons

Ms. Mary Novello (Co-Vice President)

Mr. Christyan Seay

Ms. Mary Beth Williams

The Rev. Sarah L. Weedon

Dr. Judith A. Wubah