

BEING A LICENSED LAY MINISTER

This document contains advice and guidelines, and some regulations, relevant to the day-to-day ministry of an LLM. The sections are:-

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1 PUBLIC DUTIES WHICH MAY BE PERFORMED BY A LICENSED LAY MINISTER

LLMs are licensed to do the following:-

- Lead Morning and Evening Prayer.
- Lead a Service of the Word.
- Lead the first part of “A Service of the Word with a celebration of Holy Communion”.
- Lead other informal services of worship including All-age worship.
- Preach at the Eucharist, Morning or Evening Prayer and any other authorised services.
- Read the Word of God, and lead intercessions.
- Administer the elements at the Holy Communion [Note: this includes taking the sacrament of Holy Communion to the sick and housebound at the request of the minister of the parish].
- Preside at public worship with communion by extension, *subject to the regulations in Section 10 below.*
- Publish banns of marriage, in the absence of the incumbent. [Note: the authorised ordained minister should have made the requisite entry in the register book of banns of

the church; the LLM may then sign the banns book, but not the Certificate of Banns, which is the responsibility of the authorised ordained minister].

- Visit the sick to read and pray with them.
- Conduct Funeral Services, with the consent of the family of the deceased, and the incumbent (or during a vacancy, the area dean).
- Conduct a service of prayer and dedication after a civil marriage. (However, they may not officiate at a marriage service, although they may assist.)
- Teach, train and nurture adults in Christian education.
- Teach in Sunday School and elsewhere.
- Generally to undertake such pastoral and educational work and to give such assistance to any minister as the bishop may direct.

Licensed lay ministers are also encouraged to undertake initiatives in community outreach and “Fresh Expressions of Worship”.

Geographic scope of licence

When a licensed lay minister is issued with a licence in the Oxford Diocese, they are licensed for their episcopal area or archdeaconry. However, they are normally attached to a parish/benefice, deanery or some form of sector ministry (e.g. hospital chaplaincy). In the parish context they work with the approval of the incumbent of the parish. In a non-parochial sphere of work they minister with the agreement of a designated minister-in-charge. See also the section on Deployment in the separate document LLMs in Changing Circumstances.

Modifications to Standard Services – Absolution and Blessings

The BCP and Common Worship forms of service prescribe what is to be substituted for the normal form of Absolution when the service is taken by someone other than a priest. In addition a licensed lay minister should substitute the words ‘us’ and ‘our’ for the words ‘you’ and ‘your’ in using the prayer of blessing at the end of the service.

2 MINISTRY AGREEMENT

Licensed lay ministers and their incumbent are obliged to make an agreed written statement about the shape of the LLM’s ministry. This should be drawn up in the light of the remarks in the section on collaborative ministry below, and taking into account:

- The extent to which the LLM is expected to be involved in regular ministry activities such as preaching and leading worship, teaching, pastoral or mission work, and any other activities which are a particular expression of the LLM’s ministry.
- The role of the LLM in the local ministry team, and in relation to the PCC. (However, note that this is in the power of the annual parochial church meeting. See the section on the PCC below.)
- Arrangements for ongoing development of the LLM’s gifts (post-admission training, and continuing ministerial education).
- Attendance at diocesan and area events and groups for LLMs.
- Maintaining a balance between their commitments as an LLM and the requirements of their family, work and leisure.

- Any arrangements for reimbursement of expenses incurred through the performance of the LLM's duties

This agreement should be reviewed regularly, normally at the time of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting or prior to a ministerial development review. It is good practice for Licensed Lay Ministers to keep a record of the duties they have undertaken, to which they may refer.

3 COLLABORATIVE MINISTRY AND PASTORAL CARE - being a member of the ministry team

LLMs hold a responsible leadership position and exercise a special role in the life of their parish. They often occupy a middle place in a church community, working in collaboration with the incumbent and other clergy team members as well as being themselves a part of the laity. Likewise they combine their daytime occupation, be that in the home or workplace, with their lay ministry duties such as preaching and leading worship, pastoral care or taking funerals.

Within the structures of the Church of England the incumbent is the leader in a parish or benefice, and will negotiate with the LLM appropriate areas of ministry, taking into consideration both their own gifts as well as the needs of the parish. To this end a collaborative approach to leadership is to be expected by both the incumbent and the LLM and for this to work well, an up to date ministry agreement, agreed with their incumbent is required of all LLMs.

While styles of ministry will differ according to temperament, parish size, location, the number of people on the ministry staff and the commitments of the LLM, the following are recommended:

- Regular staff meetings where prayer, planning of worship services and theological discussion are part of the agenda.
- The building of trust, confidentiality and mutual support between the incumbent and the LLM with a sense of them ministering together.
- Supervision meetings when feedback on ministry, preaching and leading of worship can be discussed, especially with a newly licensed LLM.

Within this collaborative approach it is expected that differences of role, personality and approach will be held creatively.

While this is the ideal, there are times when there is a deterioration in the relationship between the incumbent and LLM for whatever reason, or when pastoral issues such as stress or illness arise. In these circumstances it is appropriate to contact the archdeaconry adviser, area dean or the deputy warden of readers in order to discuss a way forward.

LLMs in training should refer initially to the director of training should they encounter training or pastoral concerns which affect their training.

4 BREAKDOWN OF COLLABORATIVE MINISTRY

Every licensed lay minister ministers with the consent and co-operation of their incumbent.

When difficulties occur within the ministry team every effort should be made to address them and resolve them before they escalate. Licensed lay ministers are encouraged to speak to their archdeaconry adviser at an early stage: informal discussion may help to resolve the situation. Archdeaconry advisers may involve other diocesan staff who may be able to help. Further to that, mediation can be arranged if appropriate and considered likely to be helpful.

Where breakdown does occur and transfer seems the only viable option, the LLM or incumbent is to inform the archdeaconry adviser and the deputy warden of readers, setting out the reasons for transfer, and any ideas about new spheres of ministry. On the recommendations of the deputy warden, the following steps are taken:

- There should be a proper discussion between the LLM and the incumbent or supervising minister about the transfer, with appropriate agreement on immediate duties and responsibilities. Every attempt should be made to do this harmoniously.
- Both LLM and incumbent or supervising minister should inform the archdeaconry adviser of the date on which recognised ministry ceases, together with any other relevant information about practice of ministry. The LLM's licence may need to be surrendered to the archdeaconry adviser.
- The archdeaconry adviser, or some other appointed person, may then discuss with the LLM any plans for a new ministry, and arrangements made. As part of this process the Parish Development Adviser should be consulted.
- After a period of transition, to be agreed with the archdeaconry adviser or deputy warden of readers, the new incumbent or supervising minister shall, in consultation with the LLM and any other members of the ministry team (and with the agreement of the PCC), contact the archdeaconry adviser to arrange for transfer to be carried out.

Disciplinary

In rare cases, where a serious disciplinary issue arises the bishop has the right to revoke the lay minister's licence. This will, of course, only be done in extreme circumstances and after considerable discussion. The procedure in these circumstances is set out in Canon E6, and includes a right of appeal to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

5 FINANCE 1 - EXPENSES

Although many LLMs offer their ministry willingly and without charge, this should not be assumed. LLMs are encouraged to claim appropriate expenses. Each parish or organisation where LLMs work should see that their LLM is given support, which includes the payment of appropriate expenses.

LLMs should claim private car mileage at the approved diocesan rate plus any other appropriate expenses, as follows:

- **For taking a service during a parish vacancy.** The LLM should claim his/her expenses from the churchwarden.
- **Where a funeral is taken.** No remuneration should be accepted by the LLM, except for expenses (which would normally be handled via the undertaker). The funeral fee (wherever the funeral takes place - church, crematorium or cemetery), goes to the PCC of the parish through which the funeral is arranged. In the unlikely event of no parish being involved the fee goes to the deceased's geographical home parish. The PCC handles the fee in exactly the same way as clergy fees are handled.
- **For taking services outside her/his own parish.** The LLM may claim appropriate expenses from the churchwarden or treasurer of the church which has utilised their ministry.
- **For taking services or preaching at churches of other denominations.** It is left to the LLM's discretion as to what is the most appropriate action to take in relation to expenses, but LLMs should not accept a fee.

If you have further questions about the financial aspects of licensed lay ministry, please ask your archdeaconry adviser in the first instance, or the deputy warden of readers.

6 FINANCE 2 - DIOCESAN FUNDING OF LICENSED LAY MINISTRY

There is a diocesan budget for LLMs. The deputy warden of readers is responsible for agreeing this with the Board of Mission. This budget covers the following items:

- The annual quota (on a per-head basis) payable to the Central Readers' Council.
- A subscription to 'The Reader' magazine for every LLM in the diocese.
- A registration fee payable to the Ministry Division for each candidate for training to licensed lay ministry.
- Selection (and some costs towards training) of licensed lay ministry candidates.
- Grants for continuing ministerial development of LLMs.
- Costs for maintaining the LLM infrastructure in the diocese (general administration, expenses of archdeaconry advisers, and so on).

This budget for licensed lay ministry is paid for by an annual per-head grant paid by parishes who have one or more LLMs – currently about £30 per LLM.

7 CONTINUING MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT (CMD)

Licensed lay ministers, in common with those who are ordained, are expected to grow in their understanding of their faith and spirituality and in how it relates to the world around them. To this end they are expected to attend appropriate courses, retreats, study programmes or quiet days during the year. Should funding be needed for these, the parish could be approached for payment. It is common to include something about a minister's arrangements or plans for development in their ministry agreement.

The Diocese also holds events specifically for LLMs each year.

- The first is the **forum** which is a day or half day usually towards the beginning of the year where a visiting speaker is invited to facilitate a day around an issue that is relevant to licensed lay ministry. Recent topics have included "Developing Holistic Discipleship" and "Safeguarding".
- The second event is the **annual conference** currently held over a weekend. This provides an opportunity for LLMs to meet others, to worship together and to hear high quality speakers and attend relevant workshops.
- Thirdly, there is the **annual service** held in Christ Church, Oxford in November where new LLMs are licensed and where existing LLMs have the opportunity to renew their promises within the wider LLM community.

These events are subsidised by the Diocese, and all LLMs are encouraged to attend them.

8 ROBES

The normal dress of licensed lay ministers for their liturgical duties is black cassock, surplice, academic hood (where appropriate), and licensed lay minister's blue scarf. The scarf must be unadorned, apart from temporary things like poppies on Remembrance Sunday, and of the right

colour (middle blue). In Eucharistic services, a licensed lay minister may, if invited by the incumbent or minister-in-charge, wear an alb, with the reader's large medallion round the neck on a chain or blue ribbon. The reader's scarf should not be worn with the alb.

9 PCC MEMBERSHIP

It is appropriate that licensed lay ministers who exercise a ministry in a particular place should be represented on the PCC or other leadership forum. However, LLMs are not automatically members of the PCC. The annual parochial church meeting must decide whether or not each LLM should be a member. The incumbent or minister should give consideration to the best policy in this matter. Where several LLMs serve on a ministry team, membership of the PCC by only one LLM might be considered a sufficient representative of the others.

10 PUBLIC WORSHIP WITH COMMUNION BY EXTENSION

Public worship with Communion by Extension is the distribution of previously consecrated elements to a congregation at a different service or gathered in a church other than that in which the service of Holy Communion was celebrated, by a person other than the eucharistic president.

The permission of the area bishop must first be sought by the incumbent or minister-in-charge in order that the service may take place. The licensed lay minister's licence includes permission to take the service only when the bishop's permission has been given.

The regulations on this service are found in guidelines produced by the House of Bishops, which must be followed.

<http://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/worship/texts/extension.aspx>

The Common Worship service 'Public Worship with Communion by Extension' must be used, and the directions in the service and notes followed. The service is found on the Church of England website and a booklet can be purchased from Church House bookshop or other bookshops.

<http://www.chbookshop.co.uk/>

The official books should be used by the congregation or downloaded and customised. The congregation should not be handed the normal communion service book. The register should be signed 'Communion by Extension', not Holy Communion.

Oxford Diocese puts on training for this service from time to time, and LLMs who are going to lead it are encouraged to come on the training before they take up this ministry. You can see if any event is planned go to this link <http://ldm.eventbrite.co.uk>. If you need this training, and nothing appears planned, it would be worth contacting the Deputy Warden of Readers so that s/he knows there are people looking for this.

It should be noted that this practice is different and distinct from the **administration of Communion to the sick and housebound**, which has different rules and a different service found in Pastoral Services. **All LLMs are licensed to exercise this ministry, and no special permission is needed.** For suitable service guides see:-

<http://www.churchofengland.org/prayerworship/worship/texts/pastoral/healing.aspx#ministry>

Helpful advice and guidance can also be found in:

For Communion by Extension: Tovey, P. (2001). *Public Worship with Communion by Extension: A Commentary*. Grove Worship Series 167. Cambridge: Grove Books.

And for home Communion: Headley, C. (2000), *Home Communion: A Practical Guide*, Grove Worship Series 157, Cambridge: Grove Books.

11 READER or LICENSED LAY MINISTER?

The legal underpinning for LLM ministry is set out in Canons E4-E7 of the Canons of the Church of England. These are in the document titled 'Canons for Reader Ministry' here in our LLM documents section, or they can be found using any search engine. LLMs are urged to read these, as they cover the key legal issues concerning appointment, ministry and discipline.

One thing to note is that the word 'Reader' is used in the Canons, whereas in this diocese and a number of other dioceses, they would be known as licensed lay ministers. The term Reader is also used in publications like Common Worship. This difference in wording is of no significance: they are not two different offices in the Church either nationally or locally, but simply different descriptions given to the same ministry whether it is performed in this diocese or in another diocese in the Church of England. Either way, those Canons are the binding authority for LLM ministry.

