



The Diocese of New Jersey

A MANUAL
FOR THE
LICENSING
OF
LAY MINISTRIES

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*From the *Book of Occasional Services*

Preface and Guidelines for All Licensed Lay Ministries

This manual is prepared to assist Clergy in charge of Congregations in requesting licensing for members of their congregations and in training and overseeing their ministries. The governing principle is Title III, Canon 4 of the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church. (See Appendix I, p. 7.)

Except in unusual circumstances, the Licenses issued in the Diocese of New Jersey at this time will be Pastoral Leader, Worship Leader, Preacher, Eucharistic Minister, Eucharistic Visitor, Catechist, and Evangelist. Training is by clergy at the local level.

The Diocese of New Jersey may offer additional training through our Ministry Institute. For information on training schedules please contact the diocesan office at 877-394-5281. This training is strongly suggested but is not required for licensing.

All persons being licensed, except for the positions of Preacher and Eucharistic Minister, must attend a Sexual Misconduct Awareness course offered by the Diocese of New Jersey (at least once every five years).

Persons admitted to Postulancy and Candidacy in this Diocese are automatically licensed to perform these duties as part of their practical training for ministry under the supervision of the Priest in Charge of a Congregation.

In accordance with Title III, Canon 4, Section 1 (a), all persons licensed as prescribed in this manual must be confirmed communicants in good standing as defined by Title 1, Canon 17, Section 3 of the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church (communicants of this Church who for the previous year have been faithful in corporate worship, unless for good cause prevented, and have been faithful in working, praying, and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God). Licenses may be issued at any time and may be renewed on the First Sunday of Advent upon the written request of the Priest in Charge of the Congregation. Such requests should be submitted not later than the 1st of November of each year. In renewing licenses, such factors as performance of the ministry by the person licensed, continuing education in the licensed area, and the endorsement of the Member of the Clergy exercising oversight of the congregation will be considered.

A person who is licensed in the Diocese of New Jersey 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(s) will occur.

The Priest in Charge (or if there is not a clergy in charge, then a person in charge) of the Congregation will determine the numbers of licensees for each congregation. Each cleric is asked to use good judgment and common sense when applying for licenses for his/her congregation. Licenses will be renewed after a three-year term.

Pastoral Leader

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.

Pastoral Leaders shall be licensed in accordance with Title III, Canon 4, Section 3 of the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church.

Worship Leader

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.

Worship Leaders shall be licensed in accordance with Title III, Canon 4, Section 4 of the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church.

Preacher

A Preacher is a lay person authorized by the Bishop to preach. S/he can only preach in congregations under the direction of the Priest in Charge or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.

Preachers shall be licensed in accordance with Title III, Canon 4, Section 5 of the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church.

Eucharistic Minister

A Eucharistic Minister is a lay person authorized to administer the Consecrated Elements (both bread and wine) 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.

Eucharistic Ministers exercise an extraordinary ministry for their local community of faith. They participate in the sacred life of the Church in handling the outward visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace received in the Body and Blood of Christ, given to his people. Youth of 16 years and above may be Eucharistic Ministers if they are confirmed and demonstrate an understanding and reverence for the sacraments.

Each rector or vicar (or if there is not a clergy in charge, then a person in charge) will certify to the Bishop at the time of requesting licensure that the following minimum standard of training in the following areas has been met:

- a. Scriptural reading and pronunciation. (Also for those who are Lectors)
- b. Respect for the Sacrament and its proper handling.
- c. Observance of the rules set forth in the canon and in the rubrics of the *Book of Common Prayer* and *The Book of Occasional Services*.

Formal training classes should be held for Eucharistic Ministers, if those to be licensed are not trained at the Ministry Institute of the Diocese of New Jersey. When the licenses are received, a formal recognition and commissioning ceremony should be included at the main celebration of the Eucharist on the First Sunday in Advent using the form set forth in the *Book of Occasional Services*.

Eucharistic Ministers shall be licensed in accordance with Title III, Canon 4, Section 6 of the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church.

Eucharistic Visitor

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.

Eucharistic Visitors exercise an extraordinary ministry for their local community of faith. They participate in the sacred life of the Church in handling the outward visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace received in the Body and Blood of Christ, given to his people. In being commissioned at the end of the worship service to go out to give the Holy Eucharist to shut-ins, they continue the communal act of worship and include those members they visit in the embrace of the entire community of the faithful.

Each rector or vicar will certify to the Bishop at the time of requesting licensure that the following minimum standard of training in the following areas has been met:

- a. Scriptural reading and pronunciation.
- b. Respect for the Sacrament and its proper handling.
- c. Observance of the rules set forth in the canon and in the rubrics of the *Book of Common Prayer* and *The Book of Occasional Services*.

- d. Sensitivity to the needs of the person who is ill or shut in and to those of family members or friends who may be present.
- e. Methods of interpretation of the sermon or homily at the service from which they bring the Sacrament.
- f. That the rector, vicar or parish deacon has made at least two pastoral calls with the Eucharistic Visitor prior to licensure.

Formal training classes should be held for Eucharistic Visitors, if those to be licensed are not trained at the Ministry Institute, Diocese of New Jersey. When the licenses are received, a recognition and commissioning ceremony should be included—ideally at the main celebration of the Eucharist on the First Sunday in Advent using the form set forth in the *Book of Occasional Services*. Commissioning words should be said at the end of the service each time the Eucharistic Visitor is administering sacraments to the sick or shut-in.

Eucharistic Visitors shall be licensed in accordance with Title III, Canon 4, Section 7 of the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church.

Additional Guidelines for Eucharistic Visitors

1. Where a Deacon serves in a congregation, that minister should supervise the work of the Eucharistic Visitors.
2. It is recommended that the person to be ministered to be prayed for specifically in the Prayers of the People by the congregation on that day.
3. 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, Eucharistic Visitors come forward and are commended for this ministry 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.

4. 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.
5. The people to whom Holy Communion is to be administered are to be notified in advance and the time of the appointment clearly set.
6. Only the order of the rite entitled "*Distribution of Holy Communion by Lay Eucharistic Ministers*" is to be used. (Please see Appendix I.)

Catechist

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

The Catechist must be trained and able to teach others the material before licensing. He/she needs to have a firm understanding of the following subjects:

- The Holy Scriptures, content and background
- The Book of Common Prayer and The Hymnal
- Church History
- The Church's Doctrine as set forth in the Creeds and An Outline of the Faith, commonly called the Catechism
- Methods of Catechesis

Catechist is a special category of license and will be issued only after consultation between the Priest in Charge of the Congregation and the Bishop. Due to its special nature, this license may be renewed more than once.

Catechists shall be licensed in accordance with Title III, Canon 4, Section 8 of the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church.

Evangelist

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.

Evangelists shall be licensed in accordance with Title III, Canon 4, Section 9 of the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church.

Appendix I: Distribution of Holy Eucharist by Eucharistic Ministers to Persons Who Are Ill or Infirm (From Book of Occasional Services)

Concerning the Service

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 in their church’s assembly on Sunday or some other principal feast.

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

- a). Administering the Elements at any Celebration of Holy Eucharist if there is an insufficient number of Priests or Deacons present;
- b). Directly following a Celebration of the Holy Eucharist on Sunday or other principle Celebrations, if so authorized by the Member of the Clergy in charge of the Congregation and especially licensed thereto by the Bishop, taking the Sacrament consecrated at the Celebration to those 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 Eucharistic Visitors* to persons who are ill or infirm:

This form is to be used immediately after the principal Eucharist on Sunday or other feast days or special celebrations.

It is desirable that fellow parishioners, relatives, and friends join with the Eucharistic Visitor and the person(s) unable to be present for the public celebration of the Eucharist.

The 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, concluding with the following or some other Collect

Almighty Father, whose dear Son, on the night before he suffered, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood: Mercifully grant that we may receive it thankfully in remembrance of Jesus Christ our Lord, who in these holy mysteries gives us a pledge of eternal life, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

A Confession of Sin may follow

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.*

Minister May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. *Amen.*

The Lord's Prayer

The Holy Communion

The Gifts of God for the People of God

And may add Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

The Sacrament is administered with the following or other words

The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven.

The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation.

or

The Body (Blood) of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you in everlasting life. [Amen.]

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/brother* 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/his* 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.*

Minister Let us bless the Lord.

Response Thanks be to God.

Appendix II: Commissioning Eucharistic Ministers and Eucharistic Visitors

Sponsor I present to you *these persons who have* been chosen and licensed to administer the sacrament in this congregation.

Antiphon

The cup of blessing which we bless is a sharing in the Blood of Christ. The bread which we break is a sharing in the Body of Christ.

V. As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup:

R. You proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

Grant, Almighty God, that those who minister the Bread of Life and cup of blessing may live in love and holiness according to your commandment and at the last come to the joy of your heavenly feast with all your saints in light; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

In the Name of God and of this congregation, I commission you [N.] to administer the sacrament in this *Parish* [and give you this _____ as a token of your ministry].

From the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church

TITLE III, CANON 4: Of Licensed Ministries

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 person, and the duration of licenses shall be established by the Bishop in consultation with the Commission on Ministry.

(b) The Presiding Bishop or the Bishop Suffragan for the Armed Forces may authorize a member of the Armed Forces to exercise one or more of these ministries in the Armed Forces in accordance with the provisions of this Canon. Requirements and guidelines for the selection, training, continuing education, and deployment of such person shall be established by the Bishop granting the license.

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.

(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 a 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.

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 workshop 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. Person 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 Eucharist 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.