



## PATHWAYS TO LICENSED MINISTRY

### Core Beliefs

The Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania values the ministry of all people. There are many ways to exercise ministry. A special set of ministries, called Licensed Ministries, authorized by the Canons of the Episcopal Church, is available to qualified laypersons. Currently in our diocese, licenses are available for Eucharistic Minister, Eucharistic Visitor, Preacher, and Worship Leader.

At the foundation of the program are these core beliefs:

- We are all called to ministry by our Baptism:
  - The three renunciations and three promises in the Examination of the Candidates for Baptism (BCP pgs. 302, 303) and the Baptismal Covenant (BCP pgs. 304, 305) give us the foundation of our call.
  - As we revisit and reflect on them, we discover insights and implications for our call.
- God gives us gifts to use to restore God's Dream, the Beloved Community, a peaceful, loving, fruitful world:
  - Our gifts are where we find delight/passion. When we put them to use mending the world's wounds, we are living into our call. "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." – Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking: A Theological ABC*.
  - The parish setting is a nurturing place in which to develop and exercise our gifts for ministry.
- Calls to all orders of ministry are supported and nurtured within the family of God, so helping parishes become centers of discernment and formation is foundational. The Commission on Ministry strongly encourages parishes to work towards this end and provides training, programming, and other resources to support their work.
- The orders of ministry acknowledge different roles, not a hierarchy of faith/devotion/access to God's grace.
- There are a variety of pathways to gain the readiness to serve. For Licensed Ministries this is based upon the person's prior experience and formation, the person discerning a call, and the resources and availability of the clergy within the parish. Each pathway involves an ongoing process of discerning, equipping, and commissioning.

- Formation is an ongoing activity that continues long after a license has been issued. Formation in a broader community (for example, a learning cohort or diocesan-wide training event) expands opportunities to develop expertise in the Licensed Ministry area in a safe and supportive environment and in relationship with others. Learning cohorts may be available for Stevenson School for Ministry students.



## **Description of Licensed Ministries**

The four types of Licensed Ministries available to qualified laypersons in our diocese are:

- **Eucharistic Minister:** A Eucharistic Minister is a lay person authorized to administer the Consecrated Elements at a Celebration of Holy Eucharist.
- **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.
- **Preacher:** 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.
- **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.

By canon, all licensed ministries are to be exercised chiefly in the individual's home parish unless other arrangements have been made by the Licensed Minister and clergy person and the Bishop has given permission.

Licenses are valid for a period of three years. Renewal Applications must be received no later than 60 days prior to the expiration in order to be processed in a timely fashion.

The Bishop may revoke a license at any time for any reason.



## The Process

The three components of licensing are Discerning, Equipping, and Commissioning. Below is an outline of the process.

Note: Each time “Rector” appears, please read “Rector, or Bishop’s Designee in the absence of a Rector.”

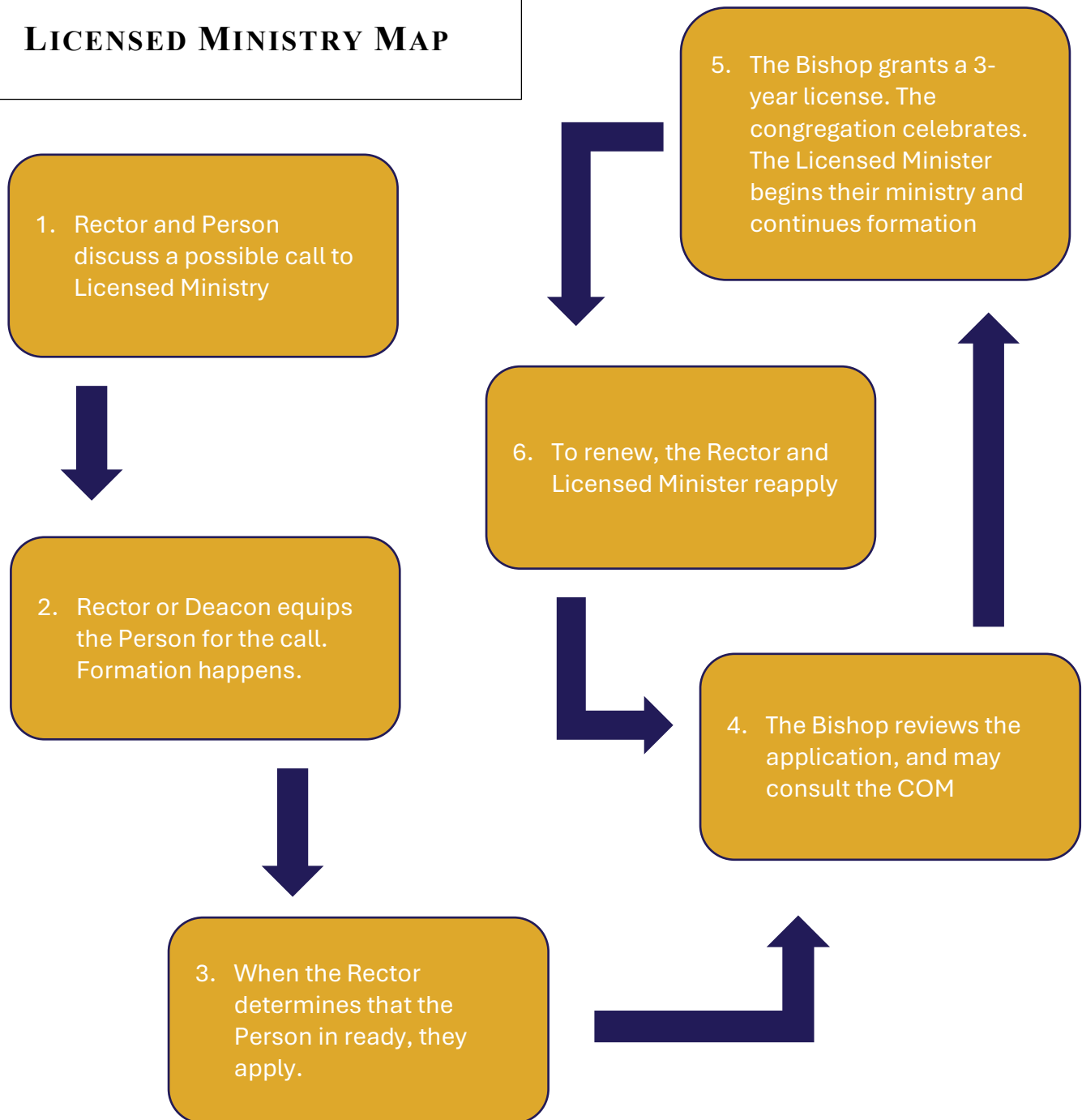
1. *Discerning*: A Congregant and the Rector discuss a possible call to licensed ministry. The discussion may be initiated either by the person who feels a call or the Rector who sees a call. Part of the discussion includes a review of:
  - Canonical requirements (Baptized, confirmed, a member in good standing)
  - Diocesan requirements/recommendations for each ministry
  - The knowledge, practices, approaches, and skills needed to practice either ministry, as established by the Commission on Ministry (COM)
  - Spiritual and emotional readiness
2. *Equipping*: The Rector is responsible for affirming to the Bishop that the person seeking licensing has met the basic and ministry-specific requirements outlined in this document and is sufficiently formed and competent to engage in the specific ministry.
  - The responsibility for training Eucharistic Ministers and Eucharistic Visitors rests with the congregation’s Deacon, or Rector in the absence of the Deacon.
  - For all other licensed ministries, the Rector is responsible for designing a formation plan in consultation with the person seeking licensing, as outlined in this document, and guided by the Competencies. Preparation for Preacher and Worship Leader require a formal Individual Formation Plan, which is submitted with the application.
3. *Discerning*: When the person seeking licensing and the Rector determine readiness for licensure, they complete and sign an application and endorsement form, and, if required, an Individual Formation Plan, to be sent to Nichol Free, Executive Assistant to the Bishop, [nfree@diocesecpa.org](mailto:nfree@diocesecpa.org).
4. *Discerning*: The Bishop reviews the application consulting, if she chooses, with the COM.
5. *Commissioning*: The Bishop may grant a 3-year license. License Renewal Applications must be received 60 days prior to expiration in order to be processed in a timely fashion. The COM strongly recommends that the Rector installs the Licensed Minister during a regular Sunday worship service, or other public gathering as a way to recognize and

celebrate the person's new role in the congregation, and to support and encourage all laypersons in their own ministries. The Licensed Minister begins their ministry under the supervision of their Rector and continues formation.

6. *Renewal:* If the Rector and Licensed Minister wish to renew the license for the next three years, they complete a License Renewal Application, to be sent to Nichol Free, Executive Assistant to the Bishop, [nfree@diocesecpa.org](mailto:nfree@diocesecpa.org). Applicants will be asked to describe how they have practiced their ministry: how often, in what circumstances, what they have done well, and where are their learning edges. Applicants will also be asked how they have continued their formation. Forms are due 60 days prior to expiration, in order to be processed in a timely manner.

**Note concerning active licensed ministers licensed prior to September 1, 2024:** Currently licensed ministers will be required to meet all formation/competency requirements listed in this document at the time of their next license renewal.

## LICENSED MINISTRY MAP





## Basic Requirements

All those applying for licensing as lay ministers in the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania will meet the following qualifications:

- Confirmed communicant in good standing
- Faithful and regular in worship and in stewardship
- Active prayer life
- Known and respected within the congregation
- Endorsement of the clergy person in charge of the parish
- Additional requirements for each ministry are delineated in the ministry descriptions beginning on page eight.

For the online application form for each ministry, follow these links:

- For Eucharistic Ministers and Visitors:  
[https://theepiscopaldioceseofcentralpa.formstack.com/forms/lem\\_lev\\_app](https://theepiscopaldioceseofcentralpa.formstack.com/forms/lem_lev_app)
- For Worship Leaders:  
[https://theepiscopaldioceseofcentralpa.formstack.com/forms/worship\\_leader\\_app](https://theepiscopaldioceseofcentralpa.formstack.com/forms/worship_leader_app)
- For Preachers:  
[https://theepiscopaldioceseofcentralpa.formstack.com/forms/preacher\\_app](https://theepiscopaldioceseofcentralpa.formstack.com/forms/preacher_app)

For a paper form, contact Nichol Free, Executive Assistant to the Bishop, [nfree@diocesecpa.org](mailto:nfree@diocesecpa.org).

Online or on paper, completed applications are submitted to Nichol at the above address for consideration by the Bishop.



## Licensed Eucharistic Minister

### Description:

A Eucharistic Minister is a lay person authorized to administer the Consecrated Elements at a Celebration of Holy Eucharist

### Formation:

Completion of a course of training and study under the supervision of a Deacon, or Rector if no Deacon is present, to include:

- The various theological understandings of the Holy Eucharist in the Anglican tradition
- Methods and practice of the administration of the elements (use of the purificator, rotation of the chalice, [prohibition of] the use of intinction, consumption of remaining elements)
- Recommended:
  - Safe Church, Safe Communities training up to date (within 3 years, available at no cost from the diocese)
  - Anti-Racism and Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery training (within 5 years, available at no cost from the Stevenson School)

### Core Competencies:

- An understanding of basic sacramental theology as presented in the *Book of Common Prayer*
- An appreciation of why The Episcopal Church has a focus on Eucharistic worship, per the 1979 Book of Common Prayer
- An understanding of the structure of the service of Holy Eucharist Rite I, Holy Eucharist Rite II, Enriching our Worship and the variations in theme and tone
- A working knowledge of the various architectural elements and ecclesiastical appointments used in sacramental worship (i.e. piscina, credence table, aumbry, etc.)
- Knowledge of the manual acts and movements around the chancel during the celebration of the Eucharist and, appropriately "who does what"
- An ability to move safely around the chancel and maneuver the particular space in the parish (steps, etc.)
- An ability to administer the chalice, physically, without discomfort or unsteadiness

- The capacity to act with decorum and respect around holy things and to model this behavior for others



## **Licensed Eucharistic Visitor**

### **Description:**

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.

### **Formation:**

Completion of a course of training and study under the supervision of a Deacon, or Rector if no Deacon is present, to include:

- Methods and practice of the administration of the elements. (use of the purificator, rotation of the chalice, prohibition of the use of intinction, consumption of remaining elements)
- Use of the *Book of Common Prayer* and approved rites for visitation
- Biblical studies sufficient to enable the Eucharistic Visitor to comment wisely on the readings for the day
- The basics of pastoral visiting
- Safe Church, Safe Communities training up to date (within 3 years, available at no cost from the diocese)
- Recommended:
  - Anti-Racism and Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery training (within 5 years, available at no cost from the Stevenson School)

### **Core Competencies:**

- The various theological understandings of the Holy Eucharist in the Anglican tradition
- An understanding of basic sacramental theology as presented in the *Book of Common Prayer*
- An appreciation of why The Episcopal Church has a focus on Eucharistic worship, per the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*
- An understanding of the structure of the service of Holy Eucharist Rite I, Holy Eucharist Rite II, Enriching our Worship and the variations in theme and tone

- A pastoral facility for conversation with and compassionate spiritual care of the sick and homebound
- A sense of boundaries and appropriate levels of engagement with those who seek the sacramental nourishment of the Sacrament
- A keen sense to "read the room" and understand when a visit needs to be abbreviated or when deeper listening is needed
- An awareness of best practices for visiting people with various medical conditions and the role of a church representative in the larger medical setting (ministering in a hospital room with hospital personnel coming in and out of the room, roommates, family members, etc.)
- An ability to reflect with the Rector or Deacon on the experience of ministering in this way



## Licensed Worship Leader

### Description

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.

### Formation:

- Safe Church, Safe Communities training up to date (within 3 years)
- Anti-Racism and Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery training (within 5 years)
- Coursework or other study
  - Through the Stevenson School for Ministry (SSFM)
    - Basic: Intro to Hebrew Scriptures, Intro to the New Testament, Prayer Book studies
    - Additional (Optional): Anglican Approaches to Ministry, Additional Scripture Study classes, Spiritual Practices coursework

### OR

- Through a formation program designed with the lay candidate and their clergyperson to meet the Core Competencies

**Note:** All formation programs for this ministry, whether through SSFM or designed by the candidate and clergyperson, will be documented in the Individual Formation Plan (IFP). The IFP is included in the application.

### Core Competencies:

- A general facility with the Holy Bible, being able to access passages and citations as needed.
- An understanding of which translations of the Bible are authorized by the church as a source of readings in Public Worship and which supplemental forms of liturgy are available for use in our church
- A facility with *The Book of Common Prayer* and its various liturgies, especially those most led by lay ministers: Morning, Noonday and Evening Prayer. Within those offices, the lay

- minister will feel comfortable designing a service that includes choices of appropriate canticles, prayers, hymns, and the appointed lessons for the day
- The ability to navigate the lectionaries of the Daily Office and Holy Eucharist
- An understanding of the calendar of the church, seasons of the church year, the variation in worship as noted by the season, the appointments in the church that reflect the church season, and a facility for the implementation of lesser feasts and fasts
- A knowledge of the *Hymnal 1982* and other authorized hymnals in The Episcopal Church and the capacity to select appropriate hymns, service music and anthems for worship services
- An ability to lead a service with an appropriate level of decorum
- Confidence in leading others in worship and guiding other lay ministers in their roles
- The presentation of a clear, measured, easily heard and understood pattern of speech
- Good diction and accurate pronunciation
- Understanding of rubrics and physical posture in worship (standing, sitting, etc.)
- Reliability and punctuality
- Pastoral sensitivity to the needs of the worshipping congregation
- Flexibility and “nimbleness” when plans go awry



## Licensed Preacher

### Description:

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

### Formation:

- Safe Church, Safe Communities training up to date (within 3 years)
- Anti-Racism and Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery training (within 5 years)
- Coursework or other study
  - Through the Stevenson School for Ministry (SSFM)
    - Basic: Intro to Hebrew Scriptures, Intro to the New Testament, Prayer Book studies, Homiletics
    - Additional (Optional): Anglican Approaches to Ministry, Anglican Homiletics, Additional Scripture Study classes, Spiritual Practices coursework

### OR

- Through a formation program designed with the lay candidate and their clergyperson to meet the Core Competencies

**Note:** All formation programs for this ministry, whether through SSFM or designed by the candidate and clergyperson, will be documented in the Individual Formation Plan (IFP). The IFP is included in the application.

### Core Competencies:

- A general understanding of the sweep of the salvation story as presented in the Bible including a significant events and persons, the general theological orientation of the Hebrew and Christian testaments
- Knowledge of the books of the Bible
- A facility with the *Book of Common Prayer* and its various liturgies
- A thorough understanding of the concepts in the prayer book Catechism

- The ability to navigate the lectionaries of the Daily Office and Holy Eucharist
- An understanding of the calendar of the church, seasons of the church year, and a facility for the implementation of lesser feasts and fasts
- A capacity for thorough exegesis of the lessons of the day
- A knowledge of appropriate resources for commentaries and sermon helps
- The ability to craft a sermon that is cogent, relates to the lessons of the day, is well structured and articulate, offers appropriate illustrations, reflects Anglican/Episcopal theology, and is pastorally sensitive
- Regardless of its style of delivery (manuscript, notes, extemporaneous) the preacher's message will be delivered with fluency and structure
- The preacher will have good voice control, diction, use accurate pronunciation and employ a manner of speech that can be easily heard and understood