



Lay Servant Ministries Program Description

Excerpt from Lay Servant Ministries 2022 Catalog

Lay Servant Ministries is one of the most significant lay leadership development programs available within the United Methodist connection. Through this equipping and empowering system, lay servants have the opportunity to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ who then go and make other disciples.

Lay Servant Ministries can be a significant component of any intentional discipleship system, particularly systems based on the core process or cycle of discipleship described in ¶122 of The Book of Discipline. Laity are the primary agents of holy love incarnate in the world: “The witness of the laity, their Christ-like examples of everyday living as well as the sharing of their own faith experiences of the gospel, is the primary evangelistic ministry through which all people will come to know Christ and The United Methodist Church will fulfill its mission” (2016 Book of Discipline, ¶127, “The Ministry of the Laity,” p. 97).

In this sense, lay discipleship is always leadership and leadership is always evangelism—because all who follow Jesus lead others to him. Laity are called to be disciples—and disciples lead others to Christ.

Discipleship begins with relationship. When we “see all the people” God calls us to love (#SeeAllThePeople), we discover that engaging

relationships with others are more than marching orders for outreach and mission: they are the very source of our own spiritual growth and a means of grace. (For resources related to #SeeAllThePeople, visit: SeeAllThePeople.org.)

Discipleship systems driven by engagement create opportunities for spiritual growth and build new relationships outside our church walls. Through authentic and consistent experiences of God's grace, new disciples grow deeper in faith and are sent into the world to share Christ's love in mission and outreach.

Disciples extend hospitality to those not yet in the body of Christ; they offer Christ by providing an opportunity for people to commit their lives to God through baptism by water and the Spirit and profession of faith; they nurture people in Christian living to help them find a true sense of purpose in life and what it means to live out their belief through acts of piety, acts of mercy, and other means of grace; and they put their faith into action by helping to transform the surrounding community through engagement in mission and ministry as they offer hospitality in the name of Jesus Christ.

Lay Servant Ministries is about equipping and empowering people as disciples who lead others to a

vibrant and world-transforming faith in Jesus Christ.

Certified Lay Servants

A certified lay servant is a professing member of a local church or charge or a baptized participant of a recognized United Methodist collegiate ministry or other United Methodist ministry setting who desires to serve the church and who knows and is committed to scripture and the doctrine, heritage, organization, and life of The United Methodist Church. This is a person who has received specific training to witness to the Christian faith through spoken communication, to lead within a church and community, and to provide caring ministry.

The certified lay servant serves the local church or charge (or beyond the local church or charge) through his or her witness, leadership, and service, inspiring others to a deeper commitment to Christ and more effective discipleship. Through continued study and training, the certified lay servant should prepare to undertake one or more of the following functions, giving primary attention to service within the local church or charge, United Methodist collegiate ministry, or other United Methodist ministry setting:

- Provide leadership, assistance, and support to the program emphases of the church or other United Methodist ministry.

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- Lead meetings for prayer, training, study, and discussion when requested by the pastor, district superintendent, or committee on Lay Servant Ministries.
- Conduct, or assist in conducting, services of worship, preach the Word, or give addresses when requested by the pastor, district superintendent, or committee on Lay Servant Ministries.
- Work with appropriate committees and teams that provide congregational and community leadership or foster caring ministries.
- Assist in the distribution of the elements of Holy Communion upon request by a pastor.
- Teach the Scriptures, doctrine, organization, and ministries of The United Methodist Church.

To become a **Certified Lay Servant**, you must:

1. Obtain recommendation from the pastor and the church council or charge conference of the local church or other United Methodist ministry in which you hold membership.
2. Complete the "Introduction to Lay Ministries: The BASIC Course."
3. Complete an advanced Lay Servant Ministries course.
4. Apply to and have qualifications reviewed by the

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district committee on Lay Servant Ministries or equivalent structure (see ¶668.3).

To maintain status as a **Certified Lay Servant**, you must:

1. Submit an annual report and renewal application to the charge conference or church council and to the district committee on Lay Servant Ministries or equivalent structure, giving evidence of satisfactory performance as a certified lay servant.
2. Obtain recommendation for renewal from the pastor and the church council or charge conference of the local church or other United Methodist ministry in which you hold membership.
3. Complete a Lay Servant Ministries advanced course in the last three years.

Certified Lay Speakers

A certified lay speaker is a certified lay servant (or equivalent as defined by his or her central conference) whose call has been affirmed by the conference committee on Lay Servant Ministries or equivalent structure to serve the church in pulpit supply in accordance and compliance with ¶341.1.

The certified lay speaker serves by preaching the Word when requested by the pastor, district

superintendent, or committee on Lay Servant Ministries, in accordance and compliance with ¶341.1.

To become a **Certified Lay Speaker**, you must:

1. Be certified as a lay servant (or equivalent as defined by your central conference).
2. Obtain recommendation from the pastor and the church council or charge conference of the local church in which you hold membership.
3. Complete a track of study including courses on leading worship, leading prayer, discovering spiritual gifts, preaching, United Methodist heritage and polity, and/or other courses as determined by the conference committee on Lay Servant Ministries or equivalent structure.
4. Interview with and obtain recommendation from the district committee on Lay Servant Ministries, or equivalent structure, to be submitted to the conference committee on Lay Servant Ministries, or equivalent structure, for approval and certification.

To maintain status as a **Certified Lay Speaker**, you must:

1. Submit an annual report and renewal application to the charge conference or church council and to the district committee on Lay Servant Ministries or equivalent structure, giving

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- evidence of satisfactory performance as a certified lay speaker.
2. Obtain recommendation for continued recognition as a certified lay speaker from the pastor and the church council or charge conference of the local church or other United Methodist ministry in which you hold membership.
 3. Complete a Lay Servant Ministries advanced course in the last three years.
 4. In the last three years, have interviewed with and obtained recommendation for renewal as a certified lay speaker from the district committee on Lay Servant
 5. Ministries, or equivalent structure, and the approval of the conference committee on Lay Servant Ministries, or equivalent structure, for recertification.

To become certified as a lay speaker, you must complete a track of study that includes one course from each of the following subject categories:

1. The BASIC Course for Lay Servant Ministries
2. Leading Worship
 - Leading Worship – Taylor Burton-Edwards
 - Your Ministry of Leading Worship 101 (online)

3. Leading Prayer
 - Leading Public Prayer – Debra R. Tyree
 - Leading Public Prayer (online)
4. Discovering Spiritual Gifts
 - Discover Your Spiritual Gifts – William J. Carter
 - OR For the Common Good – Christine Harman
 - Rediscovering Our Spiritual Gifts (online)
5. Preaching
 - Called to Preach – Dawn Chesser
 - From Your Heart to Theirs: Delivering an Effective Sermon – Tony Franks and David Carroll
6. United Methodist Heritage
 - Living Our United Methodist Beliefs – George Hovaness Donigian
 - Living Our United Methodist Beliefs (online)
7. United Methodist Polity
 - Life Together in the United Methodist Connection – Beth Galbreath
 - Life Together in the United Methodist Connection (online)

Other courses as may be determined by your annual conference committee on Lay Servant Ministries, or equivalent structure

Certified Lay Ministers

A certified lay minister is a certified lay servant or certified lay missionary (or equivalent as defined by his or her central conference) who is called and equipped to conduct public worship, care for the congregation, assist in program

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leadership, develop new and existing faith communities, preach the Word, lead small groups, or establish community outreach ministries as part of a ministry team with the supervision and support of a clergyperson.

A certified lay minister is assigned by a district superintendent in accordance with ¶419.2.

The certified lay minister serves to enhance the quality of ministry, much like a class leader did in early Methodism, through service in the local church, circuit, or cooperative parish, or by expanding team ministry in other churches and charges. As with lay ministry in early Methodism, the certified lay minister uses his or her spiritual gifts as evidence of God's grace. See also ¶268.

To become a **Certified Lay Minister**, you need to complete the following requirements:

1. Be certified as a lay servant or lay missionary (or equivalent as defined by your central conference).
2. Obtain written recommendation from the pastor and the church council or charge conference of the local church in which you hold membership.
3. Complete a track of study for certified lay ministers relevant to your assignment as defined by Discipleship Ministries or the National Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministry in collaboration with Discipleship Ministries and the conference

committee on Lay Servant Ministries or equivalent structure.

4. Receive a letter of recommendation from your district superintendent.
5. Have all requirements for certification, including appropriate screening and assessment, as defined by the annual conference, reviewed by the conference committee on Lay Servant Ministries, or equivalent structure, for referral to the district committee on ordained ministry for examination of persons who have applied in writing to be certified lay ministers and to make recommendation for certification (see ¶666.10). After the district committee on ordained ministry interviews you, the district committee on ordained ministry will make a recommendation to the conference committee on Lay Servant Ministries for final certification by that committee.

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To maintain status as a **Certified Lay Minister**, you must:

1. Submit an annual report to the charge conference or church council where membership is held and to the conference committee on Lay Servant Ministries or equivalent structure, giving evidence of satisfactory performance as a certified lay minister.
2. Every two years, obtain a ministry review by the committee on pastor-parish relations, church council, or charge conference from the congregation of which you are a member, or when under assignment, from the committee on pastor-parish relations, charge conference, or supervisory board of the ministry setting in which you are assigned.
3. Complete a Lay Servant Ministries advanced course or approved continuing education event, as defined by the conference committee on Lay Servant Ministries or equivalent structure in the last two years.
4. Obtain recommendation for recertification from the district superintendent.
5. Have all requirements for recertification reviewed by the conference committee on Lay Servant Ministries or equivalent structure for referral to the district committee on ordained ministry (for examination every two years when you have

applied in writing to be renewed as a certified lay minister and obtain recommendation for recertification; see ¶666.10). After the district committee on ordained ministry interviews you, the district committee on ordained ministry will make a recommendation to the conference committee on Lay Servant Ministries for final recertification by that committee.

Certified Lay Ministers with Specializations

We are excited to announce certified lay minister specializations in the areas of:

- UM Parish Nurse
- Children's Faith Formation
- NPHLM Lay Missioner
- Men's Ministry Specialist
- UMC Path 1 Lay Church Planter
- Congregational Care Minister (CCM)
- Certified UM Church Administrator (CUMCA)
- Simple Accountable Leadership Structure Specialist (SAS Coach)

To become a certified lay minister (CLM) with a specialization in a particular area, the CLM would need to complete additional educational/training requirements specific to that area of ministry. Each specialization has its

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own accreditation body. Specific requirements for **UM Parish Nurse, NPHLM Lay Missioner, UMC Path 1 Lay Church Planter, Children's Faith Formation, Men's Ministry Specialist, Congregational Care Minister, Simple Accountable Structure Coach, and Certified UM Church Administrator** can be found at UMCDiscipleship.org/resources/certified-lay-minister.