

PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMISSION: LICENSED LAY WORSHIP LEADERS POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide oversight to the Licensed Lay Worship Leaders within Shining Waters Regional Council. This authority is given to the Pastoral Relations Commission.

Date Approved by Pastoral Relations Commission: November 30, 2021	Review date by the Pastoral Relations Commission: 2024
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Why is this policy important?

Many lay people are called by God to courageously step forward to give leadership in worship. Those who participate in a Licensed Lay Worship Leader (LLWL) program are choosing to develop their leadership gifts further.

In the Licensed Lay Worship Leader program, the United Church has recognized a need for people to be supported through a training and licensing program. This gives both the lay leader and the congregation confidence that their leadership is built upon a strong theological and biblical foundation that is consistent with the ethos of the United Church.

A licensed lay worship leader is a full member who has been determined to have gifts and a sense of call to the ministry of worship leadership and preaching, and who has developed these gifts through participation in a course of study and is licensed by a regional council.

This policy guides the formation and participation of the Licensed Lay Worship Leaders within Shining Waters Regional Council.

Membership

The regional council may license a person as a licensed lay worship leader. (The Manual I 1.11.5)

The following requirements apply:

- a) the person must be a member of a congregation in that regional council; and
- b) the licence must be for a specified term, which may be renewed.

A licensed lay worship leader serves under the direction of the Pastoral Relations Commission through the LLWL Committee. If a licensed lay worship leader becomes a member of a community of faith in another regional council, the person must be recognized by that other regional council in order to continue serving as a licensed lay worship leader.

Preparation and Licensing:

1. The governing body of a local community of faith identifies, or a layperson who is a full member self-identifies to the governing body, a call to licensed lay worship leadership.
2. The lay member completes a preparatory course that extends over at least two years and includes the study of theology, church history, Hebrew and Christian scriptures, preaching, worship, and pastoral skills. The course of study must be approved by the LLWL Committee.
3. An individual may be exempt from a preparatory course at the discretion of the Pastoral Relations Commission. An individual's education would be evaluated using the handbook, Licensed Lay Worship Leaders (October 2016) or future editions.

4. The lay member must also complete the Racial Justice Workshop, Introduction to Personal & Professional Boundaries for Church Leaders workshop (4 hours) and a vulnerable sector police records check.
5. A LLWL is required to report any new criminal charges to the LLWL Committee Chairperson. Where there is no change in status resulting from the criminal charge, it will be reported as information to the Pastoral Relations Commission. If the criminal charge results in a recommended change in status of the LLWL, this will be brought to the Pastoral Relations Commission for approval.
6. The Pastoral Relations Commission, through the LLWL Committee tests the lay member's suitability and readiness for licensed lay worship leadership by examining their personal character, doctrinal beliefs, and educational competency.
7. The Pastoral Relations Commission issues a license to the lay member to function as a licensed lay worship leader within the jurisdiction of the region, under the direction of the region. The license is normally valid for 3 years and may be renewed.
8. Shining Waters Pastoral Relations Commission recognizes the licensed lay worship leader at a service of worship.

Ongoing Support and Guidance

1. The Pastoral Relations Commission, through the LLWL Committee interviews a licensed lay worship leader triennially, at the time of their license renewal. The region may request reporting (such as reports from congregations served, examples of sermons, either written or recorded, and orders of worship produced) as part of the interview process.
2. The licensed lay worship leader may cover three consecutive Sundays a month, to a maximum of 15 services per year, in one community of faith. Alternatively, the licensed lay worship leader may lead services for one complete month in a six-month period in one Pastoral Charge. If asked to lead worship for more Sundays, the licensed lay worship leader is to seek the approval of a Pastoral Relations Minister before agreeing to do so. The Pastoral Relations Ministers will report these exceptions to the Pastoral Relations Commission.
3. The community of faith is encouraged to remunerate licensed lay worship leaders in accordance with the Minimum Salaries & Reimbursements rate for Visiting Ministry Personnel, including travel, issued by General Council each year. It is to be noted that this rate is a minimum. When leading worship on a multi-point community of faith, it is intended that the licensed lay worship leader would receive above the minimum rate for one Sunday, but not necessarily the full rate for each worship service.
4. A licensed lay worship leader may not provide pastoral care in a pastoral charge that is not their own. It is expected that the licensed lay worship leader will refer any requests or requirements for pastoral care (counseling, home visitation, hospital visitation) to the called or appointed ministry personnel, or the community of faith's supervisor for follow-up.

5. A licensed lay worship leader may conduct a funeral. However, the conduct of funerals within a community of faith (including a funeral home), is to be arranged in consultation with the called or appointed ministry personnel or the supervisor of the community of faith. If the licensed lay worship leader conducts a funeral, they must ensure that the information is entered in the Burial Register of the community of faith.

6. A licensed lay worship leader may not wear a stole or a clergy shirt. A stole and a clergy collar are reserved for those who are ministry personnel, called or appointed to a community of faith.

