

Lay Servant Ministries

In 2012 the General Conference of The United Methodist Church approved legislation to change the name of Lay Speaking Ministries to Lay Servant Ministries. The term “servant” was chosen because it best describes what Jesus told his disciples in John 13 after he himself had performed the duties of the lowliest servant. We are also called to live out our discipleship as servants in leadership!

A Lay Servant is...

- A professing member of a local church or charge who is ready and desirous to serve the church
- Eager to serve the church, the community, and the world
- Well - informed on and committed to the Scriptures and the doctrine, heritage, organization, and life of The United Methodist Church
- Trained in witnessing to the Christian faith through spoken communication, church and community leadership, and care giving ministries
- Active in the support of the local church or charge

Lay Servants are to serve the local church or charge (or beyond the local church or charge) in any way in which their witness or leadership and service inspires the laity to deeper commitment to Christ and more effective discipleship, including the interpretation of Scriptures, doctrine, organization, and ministries of the church.

Local Church and Certified Lay Servants

Local Church Lay Servants are to serve the local church or charge in any way in which their witness or leadership and service inspires the laity to deeper commitment to Christ and more effective discipleship, including the interpretation of Scriptures, doctrine, organization, and ministries of the church. Certified Lay Servants are to serve within and beyond the local church.

Local Church and Certified Lay Servants:

- Take initiative in giving leadership, assistance, and support to the program emphases of the church
- 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, and present sermons and addresses when requested by the pastor, district superintendent, or committee on Lay Servant Ministries
- Relate to appropriate committees and ministry areas in providing leadership for congregational and community life and fostering caregiving ministries
- Assist in the distribution of the elements of Holy Communion whenever celebrated upon request by the pastor of the church of which the lay servant is a member

To become a **Local Church Lay Servant**, you must:

1. Be a professing and active member of a local church/charge
2. Make application in writing to appropriate committee and obtain recommendation from pastor and church council or charge conference
3. Complete the BASIC Course for Lay Servant Ministries

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

1. Submit an annual report and reapplication with pastor and church council or charge conference recommendations
2. Complete an approved refresher course once every three years

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

1. Be a professing and active member of a local church/charge
2. Make application in writing to appropriate committee and obtain recommendation from pastor and church council or charge conference
3. Complete the BASIC Course and one advanced course for Lay Servant Ministries
4. Have your qualifications reviewed by the district committee on Lay Servant Ministries and the annual charge conference

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

1. Submit an annual report to the charge conference and the committee on Lay Servant Ministries
2. Request in writing the renewal of certification
3. Complete an advanced course for Lay Servant Ministries at least once every three years for recertification

Lay Speakers

A lay speaker is a Certified Lay Servant, or person with equivalent training as defined by his or her district conference who is called and equipped to serve the church in pulpit supply in accordance with ¶341.1 of the 2012 Book of Discipline. The role of lay speaker was created at the 2012 General Conference to foster excellence, insure quality, provide accountability, and retain the heritage of those laity called to provide pulpit supply.

To become certified as a **Lay Speaker**, you must:

1. Be a professing and active member of a local church/charge
2. Obtain recommendation from pastor and charge conference
3. Complete the BASIC Course for Lay Servant Ministries
4. Complete a track of study to include: Discovering Spiritual Gifts, Leading Worship, Leading Prayer, Preaching, United Methodist Heritage, United Methodist Polity, and/or other courses as determined by the annual conference committee on Lay Servant Ministries or equivalent structure
5. Be examined by the District Committee on Lay Servant Ministries or equivalent structure and be recommended to the conference committee on Lay Servant Ministries or equivalent structure for certification

To maintain certification as a **Lay Speaker**, you must:

1. Submit an annual report
2. Submit an application for recertification and reappear before the district committee on Lay Servant Ministries or equivalent structure every three years
3. Receive endorsement of local church charge conference
4. Complete an advanced course for Lay Servant Ministries at least once every three years for recertification