

# THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESES OF EASTERN & WESTERN MICHIGAN

**September 14, 2022**

**Dear Church Leaders,**

As the Episcopal Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan lean into this season of collaborative mission and ministry, we are grateful for the many ways that all the baptized bring their gifts to do the work of ministry. We are working to standardize our practices around the training and licensing of lay ministers.

Eastern Michigan licenses issued last year will remain valid until the First Sunday of Advent in 2026. All licenses in Western Michigan expire in November, at the end of the liturgical year, and will need to be renewed. This cycle of licenses will be for *four* years to bring Western and Eastern Michigan into the same five-year process for renewals.

The [licensure request form is available here](#) as well as on the Lay License resource pages of our diocesan websites: [eastmich.org/lay-licensing](http://eastmich.org/lay-licensing) and [edwm.org/lay-licensing](http://edwm.org/lay-licensing). Questions about the form or certificates should be directed to (Eastern Michigan) Angela Krueger, [akrueger@eastmich.org](mailto:akrueger@eastmich.org), or (Western Michigan), Catherine Cameron-Heldt, [ccameron@edwm.org](mailto:ccameron@edwm.org).

The health and vitality of our congregations is reflected in the robust and effective formation, empowerment, and honoring of people's ministry and commitment to God and our common life. Parish life is a team sport; it takes many people using their particular gifts to make ministry possible.

Licenses are often perceived as an irrelevant administrative burden at best and means of gatekeeping at worst. For me however, I see them as a wonderful and important opportunity. We demonstrate the importance of a ministry and the work people are doing by the time and resources we invest in ensuring that they are properly equipped and recognized for what they are doing. Our churchwide canons identify seven ministries, in which the bishop commissions (licenses) individuals in the name of the Church to perform certain roles in the life of the congregation (Title III, Canon 4):

- Pastoral Leader
- Eucharistic Visitor
- Worship Leader
- Catechist Preacher
- Evangelist
- Eucharistic Minister

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I do not think we need to be limited to this list. I would love to hear from you if there are other ministries you are preparing individuals for that you would like me to support you with a similar commission. I take great joy in signing the license certificates, as they are a tangible expression of a ministry that someone is taking up to put their baptismal gifts and authority to the service of God and their congregation.

To further lift up the ministries that people are undertaking, I encourage congregational leaders to use the rite, "A Form of Commitment to Christian Service" when an individual is being commissioned/licensed to begin a new ministry. (Book of Common Prayer, p. 420-421)

All current licenses in Eastern Michigan will continue without change until time of renewal (Advent 2026). Having conferred with the Standing Committees and Diocesan Councils, the training, licensing (new and renewal), and normal practice for each of these ministries effective 1 Advent (November 27, 2022) will be:

### **Common expectations**

Individuals exercising any of these ministries are expected to be confirmed or working towards being confirmed within the next year. They are also expected to have completed the following requirements:

#### *Safe Church*

Safe Church online - once every three years. Contact your diocesan Safe Church administrator to sign up for training.

- Western Michigan: Maggie Gonzalez, [safechurch@edwm.org](mailto:safechurch@edwm.org)
- Eastern Michigan: Angela Krueger, [akrueger@eastmich.org](mailto:akrueger@eastmich.org)

#### *Dismantling Racism*

- Have completed some form of Dismantling Racism training in the past 12 months
- Commit to ongoing participation in Dismantling Racism formation opportunities
- For list of recommended formation opportunities: [Dismantling Racism webpage](#)
- For questions contact Mary Simpson,

#### *COVID-19 Vaccination*

- For protection of those with whom we minister, those receiving a lay license are expected to be current in receiving the COVID vaccine. They are recommended to also be up to date on their boosters.

### **Pastoral Leader**

This ministry is for congregations without regular resident clergy who are looking to

designate an individual “to exercise pastoral or administrative responsibility in a congregation under special circumstances, as defined by the bishop.” (Title IV.4.3) This person fills operational and pastoral roles that are separate, but complementary, to the responsibilities fulfilled by the senior warden. The specific duties and responsibilities are articulated in a job description developed by the senior warden in consultation with the Canon Missioner/Canon to the Ordinary, and approved by the bishop. The Canon to the Ordinary/Canon Missioner will design a program of training and formation to fit the particular role and needs of the individual on a case-by-case basis.

Every two years, the Canon Missioner/Canon to the Ordinary will facilitate a Mutual Ministry Review with the Pastoral Leader, wardens, and vestry and in consultation with the bishop.

### **Worship Leader**

This ministry is for laity who regularly lead public worship, in the absence of an ordained clergyperson. Training for this license will take place at the diocesan level.

Worship Leader Training will be offered on the following dates, led by our facilitator, the Rev. Curt Norman (Rector - St. John’s, Saginaw):

- November 5, 2022 from 10-2pm at St. John’s, Saginaw - Worship Leader I
- January 28, 2023 from 10-2pm at St. John’s, Mount Pleasant - Worship Leader II
- June 3, 2022 from 10-2pm via Zoom - Worship Leader I

[Registration is open now](#) and a separate invitation with more detail will be released within the next week.

Individuals seeking a renewal are expected to participate in continuing education. Opportunities for diocesan-offered sessions will be announced as they are available. Alternatively, those seeking renewal may take the Worship Leader Training full courses or consult with their Canon to the Ordinary/Canon Missioner about other options.

### **Preacher**

Parish clergy are empowered to ask anyone to preach for a single occasion. Lay members who are going to preach on a regular basis, whether there is a resident clergy or not, are expected to be appropriately equipped and commissioned by the bishop to preach in the diocese.

Individuals for whom this is a new ministry are to complete the lay preaching curriculum through the Academy for Vocational Leadership, or a similar formation program approved by the bishop. The lay preaching class at the Academy involves a year of both biblical studies and homiletics, which can be taken either sequentially or simultaneously. Individuals who are renewing their license must submit documentation detailing their engagement of continuing education coursework, which include one day-long diocesan-

sponsored workshop or some other engagement in homiletics or scripture as discussed with your Canon to the Ordinary/Canon Missioner.

Learn more about the Academy and the preaching series on the [Eastern Michigan website](#) and on the [Western Michigan website](#).

### **Eucharistic Minister**

This person is authorized to, “administer the Consecrated Elements [bread or wine] at a Celebration of Holy Eucharist.” (Title III.4.6). Training will be occasionally offered at the diocesan level, but it may take place within the parish under the leadership of local clergy. Learning topics should include:

1. Mechanics of distribution, including diocesan best practices around intinction and the common cup
2. Basic introduction to Episcopal sacramental theology
3. Liturgical presence

### **Eucharistic Visitor**

This ministry is for individuals who are, “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.” (Title III.4.7)

1. Mechanics of distribution, including diocesan best practices around intinction and the common cup
2. Basic introduction to Episcopal sacramental theology
3. Review of the diocesan policy for Safe Church, Safe Communities regarding ministering to Vulnerable Adults
4. Ministry of Presence (what it is and is not)

### **Catechists and Evangelists**

These ministries involve individuals who are commissioned to:

1. Catechist – “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.” (Title III.4.8)
2. Evangelist – “present 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.” (Title III.4.9)

Those interested in being commissioned for one of these roles should enter discussion with their local clergy about the possibility and development of mutual expectations for

formation. If the congregation does not have clergy, they should contact their Canon to the Ordinary/Canon Missioner. Once the agreed-upon training has been completed, the licensee may fill out the online license request form.

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Once more, I am neither interested in nor do I believe that these licenses are about “check the box” administrative tasks. They are a framework for formation, equipping, commissioning, and thanking. These are four actions my staff and I are deeply committed to carrying out in these and all ministries. Please be in touch with members of my staff or me if you have any questions, or if there are ways we can support you and your congregation.

Again, the [licensure request form is available here](#) as well as on the Lay License resource pages of our diocesan websites: [eastmich.org/lay-licensing](http://eastmich.org/lay-licensing) and [edwm.org/lay-licensing](http://edwm.org/lay-licensing). Questions about the form or certificates should be directed to (Eastern Michigan) Angela Krueger, [akrueger@eastmich.org](mailto:akrueger@eastmich.org), or (Western Michigan), Catherine Cameron-Heldt, [ccameron@edwm.org](mailto:ccameron@edwm.org).

Questions about training and other aspects of licensing should be directed to one of the following:

- The Rev. Canon Dr. Tracie Little, Eastern Michigan Canon to the Ordinary - [tlittle@eastmich.org](mailto:tlittle@eastmich.org)
- The Rev. Canon Valerie Ambrose, Western Michigan Central Region - [vambrose@edwm.org](mailto:vambrose@edwm.org)
- The Rev. Canon Anne Hallmark, Western Michigan Northern Region - [ahallmark@edwm.org](mailto:ahallmark@edwm.org)
- The Rev. Canon Alan James, Western Michigan Southern Region - [ajames@edwm.org](mailto:ajames@edwm.org)

**Yours in Christ,**



**The Rt. Rev. Prince G. Singh**

Bishop Provisional

The Episcopal Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan

# LAY LICENSES IN THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESES OF EASTERN & WESTERN MICHIGAN

September 2022

C2O/CM = Canon to the Ordinary or Canon Missioner SW = Senior Warden

License Type	EM Next Renewal	WM Next Renewal	Required Formation/Training for New Licenses	Required Formation/Training/Actions for Renewal Licenses
Pastoral Leader	Advent 2026	Advent 2022	Determined in conversation with the bishop	Determined in conversation with the bishop Mutual Ministry Review must be conducted every two years
Worship Leader	Advent 2026	Advent 2022	Diocesan Worship Leader Training	Continuing education is expected, whether diocesan-offered or some other opportunity approved by their C2O/CM
Preacher	Advent 2026	Advent 2022	Diocesan Training Series offered via the Academy for Vocational Leadership	Continuing education is expected, whether diocesan-offered or some other opportunity in homiletics/scripture approved by their C2O/CM
Eucharistic Minister	Advent 2026	Advent 2022	Training, whether diocesan or local according to stated expectations	Determined in conversation with the local clergy/SW
Eucharistic Visitor	Advent 2026	Advent 2022	Training, whether diocesan or local according to stated expectations	Determined in conversation with the local clergy/SW
Catechist	Advent 2026	Advent 2022	Discernment and formation as determined in conversation with local clergy (in lieu of clergy, the C2O/CM)	Determined in conversation with the local clergy/SW (or C2O/CM)
Evangelist	Advent 2026	Advent 2022	Discernment and formation as determined in conversation with local clergy (in lieu of clergy, the C2O/CM)	Determined in conversation with the local clergy/SW (or C2O/CM)