

DIOCESE OF ALGOMA

LAY READER'S MANUAL

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ALGOMA LAY READER'S MANUAL

INTENT

- 1.1 This handbook has been prepared to provide the necessary guidelines and direction to Lay Readers outlining the basic standards of academic instruction, conduct, and dress associated with the execution of their duties.
- 1.2 This Handbook and the Office of the Warden are understood to be supportive resources for the Parish Incumbent in the training, development and deployment of Lay Readers serving under his/her supervision and direction.
- 1.3 The use of this program, and its success in building up and affirming laity in their various ministries requires the support and continued interest of the Parish Incumbent.
- 1.4 We seek to provide a loose framework that is realistic, practical, and conducive to promoting expressions of lay ministry within the Church.
- 1.5 We see the value of allowing men and women responding to a call to ministry to develop an expression of lay ministry that is helpful in achieving the building up of the Body of Christ within the context in which they find themselves.

2. Eligibility

- 2.1 Any person who is a regular confirmed communicant in the Diocese of Algoma, a supporter of the parish financially, and who has reached his/her 16th birthday may be eligible to become a Lay Reader.
- 2.2 It is expected that those seeking covenanting in the Diocese as Lay Readers are reasonably proficient at reading in public.
- 2.3 Candidates should be skilled and informed members of the local Christian community.
- 2.4 Candidates should be responding to the Lord's call to serve on the Parish ministry team and prepared to assist the Incumbent in assigned duties.
- 2.5 A standardized *Form of Registration* is provided in appendix A.
- 2.6 All covenants must be over the Incumbent's signature with his/her agreement as an affirmation of ministry in the life of the Church for the applicant.
- 2.7 All Parochial Lay Reader applications must be supported by the general Vestry of the parish.
- 2.8 All Diocesan Lay Reader applications must be supported by the Deanery Council.

3. Goals and Objectives

- 3.1 Each candidate should have one or more areas of special interest (c.f. 3.5 below) in addition to Liturgical interests.
- 3.2 The candidate's interests should not be solely liturgical, and where this is a concern the candidate should indicate at least one other area of interest.
- 3.3 The communion of Lay Readers in the Diocese endeavours to be a ministry of the Spirit, providing a context in which each one may attain to the unity inherent in our faith and our knowledge of the Son of God.
- 3.4 Because resource materials change constantly in all modern areas of Christian interest, the candidate is advised to consult his/her Incumbent and/or the Warden of Lay Readers in regard to recent relevant materials.
- 3.5 Suggested areas of proficiency and/or interest:

1. Liturgical

Candidates should indicate to their Incumbent:

- a. An ability to read Lessons and service parts.
- b. A knowledge of the Book of Common Prayer and the Book of Alternative Services and other liturgical texts as authorized from time to time by the Bishop.

2. Pastoral

Candidates should indicate to their Incumbent:

- a. how their talents may be used in the Parish under the Incumbent's supervision.
- b. a knowledge of basic counseling techniques.

3. Administration

Participation in Advisory Boards, Boards of Management, the every member visitation, and similar Parish activities.

4. Education

Candidates should indicate to their Incumbent:

- a. an active participation in the Parish educational programme at the child, youth, or adult levels, in a leadership role;
- b. a knowledge of the principles of the educational programme as developed in the Parish.
- c. an awareness of general church school curricula especially those in current use.

5. Social Action

Candidates should indicate to their Incumbent:

- a. participation at the Parish level in task groups or associations for social action in their own communities.
- b. be active in movements outside the parish such as AA, Health associations, etc.
- C. understand the evangelical role of the church in the world.
- d. be knowledgeable of Governmental plans for social assistance and social agencies generally.

3.6 Specific Goals:

1. Christian Community

To foster an open, sharing group giving support one to the other in Christ.

2. Continuing Education

Offering opportunities to grow in ministry skills.

3. Spiritual Growth

To ensure the spiritual nurture of Lay Readers.

4. Team Ministry

To learn to work with the Incumbent and others in the ministry of the church.

3.7 Objectives

- 1. Encourage the Lay Readers to be members of the Parish Worship planning committee.

2. Open, informative and sharing meetings on a Deanery level at least annually under the auspices of an elected Deanery leader.
3. Encourage continuing education through the holding of annual Lay Reader conferences, and through Deanery initiatives, using both local resources and those obtained through the Warden. Deanery Lay Readers will elect a Deanery Education Director who will organize and coordinate these initiatives.

4. Applications

- 4.1. Registrations of Parochial Lay Readers, after approval has been obtained from the Parish Vestry, on completion of a training process acceptable to the Incumbent, are to be sent by the Incumbent to the Warden of Lay Readers who will forward them to the Bishop. The Registration form to be used is to be found as Appendix A.
- 4.2. Applications for licencing as Diocesan Lay Reader are made to the Bishop through the Warden of Lay Readers on the recommendation of the candidate's Deanery Archdeacon and the candidate's Incumbent, after completion of either the A.Th. Diploma, or upon completion of the following courses from the A.Th. study program, or their equivalent:
 - a. Old Testament
 - b. New Testament
 - c. Basic Christian Doctrine
 - d. Anglicanism
 - e. Liturgy
 - f. Early Church History.

In addition, the approval of the Deanery Council must be obtained. If the candidate has not been a Parochial Lay Reader previously, then satisfactory evidence of competence in Liturgy and preaching is required, either by submission of a Videotape, or by examination by a Diocesan examiner. The Application form to be used is to be found as Appendix B.

In addition, the Diocesan Lay Reader should covenant with his/her incumbent in order to clarify his/her functions within the parish where he/she normally attends.

- 4.3. Covenants for Parochial Lay Readers are made by the Incumbent upon his induction, as new candidates present themselves, and are renewed annually.
- 4.4. Notifications of transfers to an Inactive list may be directed to the Warden by either the Incumbent or the Lay Reader.
- 4.5. During the vacancy of a Parish, covenants will remain in force until the appointment of a new incumbent.
- 4.6. Lay Pastors in charge of parishes function as Incumbents of the parish insofar as the regulations within this manual are concerned. When a Lay Reader is in charge of a parish, supervision and applications for his/her licensing will be via the deanery's Archdeacon.
- 4.7. Upon the consecration of a new Bishop all Diocesan Lay Reader licences will be automatically ended. New licences will be granted by the Bishop without need for new applications

5. Classification and Organization

- 5.1 Parochial Lay Readers are covenanted only to function in the Parish. They may assist in other parishes with the express approval of their Incumbent.
- 5.2 Diocesan Lay Readers may function in any Parish within the Diocese upon request of the Bishop. They will be normally under the authority of the archdeacon of their deanery, who will be responsible for coordinating their services.
- 5.3 Lay Readers may be placed on the *Inactive List*
 - a. Should the candidate be unable to perform his/her duties as requested by the Incumbent
 - b. Should a change in Incumbents not result in a new covenant.
 - c. Should the candidate move to another Parish and the incumbent not desire his/her services as a Lay Reader.
 - d. Should the candidate move outside the jurisdiction of the Diocese and wish to maintain his/her qualifications as a former Lay Reader of the diocese.
- 5.4 A Lay Reader moving to another Parish will require a covenant with the new incumbent.
- 5.5 Lay Readers transferring from other diocesan jurisdictions should submit a photocopy of the license/covenant held in their previous parish to the incumbent.
- 5.6 Lay Readers in each Deanery will form a Deanery Lay Readers' Association initially chaired by a Deanery Warden, appointed by the Bishop. Subsequently the Association may elect other chairpersons. Such other officers as are deemed necessary will be elected annually. The Association will meet at least annually and will conduct training seminars for the membership with assistance from Deanery clergy.

6. Responsibility

- 6.1 The Lay Reader should be able to read and be prepared to do so at the Incumbent's direction with whom he/she is covenanted.
- 6.2 The Lay Reader should lead in Public Worship of Almighty God and may function as Eucharistic Assistant in the Parish in which he/she is covenanted at the Incumbent's discretion.
- 6.3 Parochial Lay Readers who have received appropriate instruction may preach sermons of their own composition.
- 6.4 Diocesan Lay Readers may be requested by the Bishop or the archdeacon of his/her Deanery to take additional positions of Teaching or Leadership in a Parish which is vacant, and may lead in Public Worship and preach in other Deanery Parishes at the direction of the Archdeacon.
- 6.5 The Lay Reader should be open to the leading of God the Holy Spirit in fulfilling those opportunities for ministry outlined in Section 3.5 above.

7. Renewal and/or Updating Process

- 7.1 All Parochial Lay Readers who change their addresses or phone numbers should communicate the new information to the Warden in order that mailings to them can continue.
- 7.2 At Diocesan Synods a listing of all Parochial Lay Readers together with the information regarding addresses, phone numbers, Email addresses and other status information will be posted. Incumbents are responsible for reviewing this information, correcting any errors and making any updates to the information.
- 7.3 Diocesan Lay Reader's Licenses are renewed at the request of the Deanery Archdeacon biannually. Renewal request forms will be sent to the appropriate archdeacon by the Warden of Lay Readers for completion.
- 7.4 Renewal stickers are to be attached to the left-hand side of the Diocesan Lay Reader's license.

8. Transfers

- 8.1 Parochial Lay Readers are covenanted in a Parish under the supervision of an Incumbent: therefore in the event of a change in either the Parish or the Incumbent, a new covenant must be entered into.
- 8.2 Lay Readers moving into the Diocese of Algoma from other Dioceses in the Anglican Communion wishing to function as a Lay Reader in this Diocese should provide the incumbent with:
 - a. a photocopy of his/her most recent license;
 - b. a letter of recommendation from the priest under whose supervision he/she held a license.
 - c. If the transferring Lay Reader has had training in the past deemed to be the equivalent of a Diocesan Lay Reader, then the above documents, together with evidence of the qualifications should be submitted to the Warden of Lay Readers who will make recommendation to the Bishop.

9. TRAINING PROCESS

- 9.1 Those in training as Lay Readers (Parochial or Diocesan) should be active in the training process and should be used at the Incumbent's discretion to fulfill Lay Reader's duties in the parish, under his/her supervision.
- 9.2 Disciplines for Study by those preparing to become a Parochial Lay Reader include:
- Biblical studies
 - Spirituality, including Divine Worship
 - Structure and function of the Church
 - Preaching
 - The Faith of the Church
 - such other studies as the Incumbent feels would be suitable for the Lay Reader's vocation.)
- 9.3 A course of study covering the above is available from the Warden of Lay Readers. It is suitable for group study but can be used (with minor modification) for individual study with the assistance of a tutor.
- 9.4 Diocesan Lay Readers shall have either obtained the A.Th. Diploma from Thorneloe University, an equivalent Diploma from another University or training centre, or have completed the following courses in the A.Th. Diploma study program (or equivalent):
- Old Testament
 - New Testament
 - Basic Christian Doctrine
 - Anglicanism
 - Liturgy
 - Early Church History
- 9.5 All Lay Readers in the Diocese are expected and encouraged to actively participate in Diocesan and Deanery sponsored events in order that they may keep abreast of current concerns and maintain a high standard of training for Lay Ministry throughout the Diocese.

10. Insignia and Vesture

- 10.1 It is important that every Lay Reader has his/her own vestment and insignia; however the Lay Reader should not be expected to bear the entire cost of providing his/her vestments
- 10.2 The normal vesture for the Choir Offices is the black cassock and white surplice.
- 10.3 At the Choir Offices, a degree or diploma hood may be worn where the Lay Reader has a University or College degree or diploma.
- 10.4 Where it is the custom, the Lay Reader shall wear the alb at the Eucharist.
- 10.5 Those training to become Lay Readers shall wear no insignia but shall wear a white alb with white cincture, such as anyone engaged in a liturgical function may wear, representing as it does a baptismal garment.
- 10.6 The Parochial Lay Reader may wear about the neck *either* a blue scarf, seven inches in width and approximately sixty inches in length, *or* an Algoma Lay Reader's Medal on a blue ribbon.
- 10.7 The Diocesan Lay Reader shall wear both the Algoma Diocesan Lay Reader's medal on a blue ribbon, and a Blue scarf as above, with the Algoma Diocesan crest affixed on the left side of the scarf, 4 inches from the bottom.
- 10.8 Parish crests, etc. may be similarly affixed to the bottom Right side of the Blue scarf by either Parochial or Diocesan Lay Readers, if approved by the Incumbent.
- 10.9 Medals and Diocesan crests may be obtained through the Warden of Lay Readers. (Appendix F.) Lay Reader's scarves may be obtained from the Anglican Book Centre. (Address may be found in Appendix E.)

11. The Inactive List

11.1 For a variety of reasons Lay Readers who are not able to be active for a period of time may find it desirable to maintain a record of their credentials as a Lay Reader. These persons will be placed on the Inactive list.

11.2 Application to be placed on the Inactive List may be made by either the Candidate or his/her Incumbent.

11.3 Lay Readers may be placed on the Inactive List for any of the following reasons:

- Inability to perform his/her duties as requested by the Incumbent.
- Should a change in Incumbents not result in a new covenant;
- should the candidate move to a new Parish and the incumbent not make a new covenant;
- should the candidate move outside the jurisdiction of the Diocese and wish to maintain ties with the fellowship of Lay Readers of the Diocese (possibly in expectation of his/her return);
- candidates wishing to temporarily relinquish their Lay Reader duties for a variety of personal reasons.

11.4 Persons on the List may be relicensed in their previously-held category upon suitable application.

12. Jurisdiction

- 12.1 The license issued by the Bishop to a Diocesan Lay Reader authorizes the Lay Reader to function within the Diocese at the pleasure and under the supervision of the Bishop, within the Deanery under the supervision of the Archdeacon, and within the Parish under the supervision of the Incumbent.
- 12.2 The covenant between an incumbent and a Parochial Lay Reader authorizes the Lay Reader to function within the Parish under the supervision of the Incumbent.
- 12.3 Parochial Lay Readers may serve in parishes other than their own at the request of the Bishop or Incumbent of that parish *and with the express permission of the Incumbent under whose supervision and direction he/she is covenanted*
- 12.4 Nothing in this Handbook shall be construed as preventing other laity from reading the scriptures during worship.

13. Warden of Lay Readers

13.1 The Warden shall be a priest or Diocesan Lay Reader in the Diocese of Algoma

13.2 The Warden shall be appointed by the Bishop and shall serve at his Pleasure.

13.3 Together with the appropriate committees the Warden shall be responsible for developing the educational and training process to assist Deanery Wardens and Incumbents in training Lay Readers.

13.4 The Warden shall be responsible for assembling and making available to trainees and Incumbents educational materials, and for circulating lists of the same.

13.5 The Warden shall liase with priests and groups of priests and Lay Readers in the role of enabler and facilitator in the development of expressions of lay ministry.

13.6 The Warden may be assisted by Deputy Wardens at the pleasure of the Bishop who may appoint them for the purpose of taking on specific duties of an extended nature.

13.7 The Warden shall be responsible for maintenance of Lay Reader data and statistics and for maintenance of a list of inactive Lay Readers, and for arranging for the relicencing of Diocesan Lay Readers.

13.8 The Warden shall undertake such other duties pertaining to lay ministries as may be required by the Bishop.

14. Eucharistic Assistants

- 14.1 Lay Readers are automatically licenced to administer the Sacrament at the Eucharist without requiring a letter of permission from the Bishop.
- 14.2 Eucharistic assistants need not be Lay Readers and covenants for laity to administer the Chalice should be made with the Incumbent of the Parish, after obtaining approval of the Parish Advisory Board.
- 14.3 Eucharistic assistants may attend all educational functions and conferences intended for Lay Readers where the subject material is appropriate to them.

15. Covenants

- 15.1 The ministry the Incumbent and Lay Reader share is a team ministry.
- 15.2 A Covenant between the Incumbent and Lay Reader should be signed at the beginning of training of a Lay Reader and annually throughout his/her ministry (whether as a Parochial or Diocesan Lay Reader). (A form suitable for photocopying is included at the end of the manual in Appendix C)

16. The Lay Reader's Fund

16.1 A Lay Reader's Fund has been established for the purpose of purchasing educational materials (Books, cassettes, videotapes, etc.), and paying the cost of some of the production of the Lay Reader newsletter.

16.2 Donations may be made to this fund through the Diocesan Synod office or through the Warden of Lay Readers.

16.3 The fund will receive registration fees for the conferences and educational meetings, and will pay the expenses of such gatherings.

17. Amendment

17.1 This document may be amended by the Bishop or Diocesan Executive Committee at any time.

APPENDIX A

REGISTRATION AS PAROCHIAL LAY READER

To be sent to the Warden of Lay Readers.

Please register as *Parochial Lay Reader*:

Name.....

Mailing Address.....

Postal Code.....

Academic degrees.....

Home Phone Number

E-Mail Address

I certify that the candidate has completed a course of study in a satisfactory manner, is a confirmed Anglican, and is a regular supporter of the Parish of

Incumbent's Signature

APPENDIX B

APPLICATION FOR DIOCESAN LAY READER'S LICENSE

To be sent to the Warden of Lay Readers who will forward it after completion to the Bishop.

Please issue a license as *Diocesan Lay Reader* for:

Name.....

.

Mailing Address.....

Postal Code.....

Academic degrees.....

Home Phone number.....Fax Number.....

Email address

I certify that the candidate has completed a course of study in a satisfactory manner, is a confirmed Anglican, and is a regular supporter of the Parish.

.....Incumbent

We certify that the candidate has received the support of the general Vestry of the Parish of.....

.....Warden

I certify that the approval of the.....Deanery Council has been given to this candidate.

.....Regional Dean

Please attach copies of the A.Th. diploma (or equivalent), or of letters from the college indicating a pass in the required subjects.

FOR CANDIDATES NOT CURRENTLY PAROCHIAL LAY READERS:

I certify that I have attended a service conducted by the above candidate (including a homily delivered by the candidate) and am satisfied that he/she is able to conduct services in a fitting manner.

.....Deanery or Diocesan Evaluator

I approve the issuing of a License to the above candidate.

.....Warden of Lay Readers

DIOCESE OF ALGOMA

Ministry Covenant Certificate

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit: ... To each is given the manifestation of the spirit for the common good. (1 Corinthians 12: 4-7)

Grace and Peace in our Lord Jesus Christ.

_____ (Name)

is undertaking a Ministry Covenant to serve in the Parish of

_____ in the Ministry of _____.

This covenant of shared ministry was celebrated and received the prayerful support of the congregation on _____ (Date).

The incumbent agrees to support this ministry, and certifies that the attached agreement has been entered with the appointee with respect to responsibilities, training, screening, accountability, term, and review and that the Vestry or Advisory Board approval, where required by the Bishop or the Canons, has been duly received.

_____ (Signature of Appointee)

_____ (Signature of Incumbent)



This covenant is initiated with the general support and approval of the Bishop of Algoma, whose continuing confidence is a qualification for leading worship, teaching, or assisting with the sacraments.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your heart, sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. (3 Colossians: 16 & 17).

Responsibilities

Training

Screening

Accountability

Term

Review



Or as attached

APPENDIX E

READING LIST

Texts which may be helpful for study by Parochial Lay Readers, either in preparation for licensing or for self-study to further their knowledge. These can be obtained from:

The Anglican Book Centre,
600 Jarvis Street,
Toronto, Ontario
M4Y 2J6

The Bible for Today's Church, by Robert A. Bennett and O.C. Edwards

Opening the Bible, by Roger Ferlo (The New Church's Teaching Series)

The Church in History, by John E. Booty

Understanding the Faith of the Church, by Richard A. Norris

Rites for a New Age, by Michael Ingham

This Anglican Church of Ours, by Patricia Bays

What is Anglicanism, by Urban T. Holmes

A course of study requiring approximately 1½ years to complete, devised by the Diocese of Brandon and extensively revised in this Diocese, is available on request from the Warden of Lay Readers. It includes study notes, discussion guides, and recommended reading.

APPENDIX F

ADDRESS OF WARDEN OF LAY READERS

The Rev. Jim Schell
4130 Muskoka Rd #117
RR #1
Baysville, ON POB 1A0

Phone: (705) 766-2373
E-mail: hjameschell@hotmail.com

Please send all applications for Lay Reader's licenses to the above, as well as all requests for Diocesan Crests for Lay Reader's scarves and for Lay Reader Medals.