

Role description for Licenced Lay Ministry

Introduction

LLM (Readers) are lay people, communicant members of the Church of England, licensed by the Bishop to assist the Incumbent by preaching, teaching, leading worship and helping with pastoral and other work. They have been described as 'theological resource people working within a pastoral context' and they will always minister within a collaborative setting. They are theologically resourced lay people; they are bridges, interpreting the world to the church and the church to the world. The ministry is nationally accredited and authorised by Canon Law. Within the Diocese, the Warden of LLM (Readers) is the coordinator of LLM ministry, working with the Director of Ministerial Training and the Diocesan LLM (Readers') Board (DRB). The diocese has adopted the nationally recommended title LLM(Reader) but for convenience, both terms are used in this document. The national report Reader Upbeat is available on the Church of England website.

Role

To be:

To be a person of prayer and worship, called by God and approved by All Saints church, who leads in a gracious, Christ-like manner; and who treats each member of the church and wider community with respect and dignity, as a unique individual created in the image of God.

To do:

1. LLMs will have opportunities to lead and preach at Morning and Evening Prayer and Services of the Word at least once a month.
2. They may preach and assist at the Eucharist, but not preside.
3. With the approval of the Incumbent and the relatives, they may conduct funerals.
4. They may not baptise (except, like any lay person, in emergency) or conduct weddings.
5. They may minister in other parishes by invitation, with the permission of their own Incumbent, but it is not primarily a peripatetic ministry. Readers receive no stipend but should be offered travelling and out of pocket expenses if asked to take services outside their own parish.
6. They will be expected to help lead Lent Groups and other possible groups during the year.
7. They will be invited to attend all PCC meetings a year.
8. They may be part of the Worship Vision Group.

Selection

1. Anyone who feels a call to this ministry should first speak to their Incumbent.
2. Detailed information packs are available from the DRB Candidates Secretary to whom applications should be returned.

3. Selection meetings are held in the early part of each year (on Saturdays in Guildford) for which the formal support of the Incumbent and PCC is needed. Selection is specifically for training for Reader ministry.

Training, Admission and Licensing

1. LLM (Readers) are trained on the Local Ministry Programme for three years (or for a shorter time if they have recent theological qualifications).
2. On satisfactory completion of the course, they are awarded the Church of England Reader's Certificate and a Foundation Degree in Ministry currently from Oxford Brookes University and are admitted by the Bishop to the Office of LLM (Reader).
3. They must have undergone DBS clearance and received Safeguarding training before being licensed as an LLM (Reader) by the Bishop to a specific parish/benefice (or, sometimes, to a hospital etc).
4. The standard licence is for five years and is renewable.
5. The licence ceases on reaching age 70, or if withdrawn by the Bishop.

Continuing Ministerial Development and Review

1. Readers are required to have an annual review with their Incumbent and submit an annual return to the DRB; the DRB also administers a quinquennial external review.
2. Newly- admitted LLMs follow a defined programme of post-licensing training for a further four years after Admission (IME 4-7). This is arranged by the tutors for IME for LLMs. Thereafter, all Readers are expected to take part in regular CMD to refresh their theological knowledge and practical skills. Personal reading, parish groups and secular training in their weekday work may all contribute to this.
3. They should attend an annual Diocesan Training Day which includes the AGM.

During a Vacancy

1. A Reader has no special status during a vacancy, but is expected to work with the Churchwardens and Rural Dean to maintain the pattern of services. Where additional assistance by Readers from other parishes is needed, the Churchwardens should contact the Registrar of the DRB or the Register of Clergy on Call.
2. Where the Reader has an old-style (pre- June 2004) licence, the new Incumbent should, within six months of his/her arrival, apply to the DRB Registrar for the Reader to be re-licensed. If this is not to happen, for any reason, the Registrar should be advised as soon as possible.

Deployment

1. LLMs are deployable to other parishes and, with the permission of the Incumbent, may give occasional help during holidays, sickness and vacancies.
2. In addition, it is possible to arrange a secondment for a longer period for the mutual benefit of Reader and parish, or to have a regular arrangement whereby a Reader goes (for example) one Sunday evening a month to a nearby church. The Warden of Readers should be consulted in such cases. If the arrangement is continued beyond six months, transfer of the Reader's licence should be discussed with the Warden.

Transfers

1. An LLM who moves to another parish in the Diocese should wait for about six months until settled in before exercising his/her ministry. Then the Incumbent and Reader, with PCC support, should apply to the Registrar for the transfer of the licence.
2. Similarly, an LLM moving into the Diocese from elsewhere should wait six months before an application for a new licence for the Guildford Diocese is made by the Incumbent and Reader, with PCC support, to the Registrar. Before a new licence can be issued the Reader must have undergone DBS clearance and have received Safeguarding training in this diocese.
3. Readers who move out of the Diocese should return their licence (but not their Admission Certificate or CofE Reader's Certificate, which are valid in all dioceses) to the DRB Registrar. The Registrar will then await contact in due course from the Registrar of the diocese to which s/he has moved.

Permission to Officiate

1. Licences expire when the LLM reaches the age of 70. If s/he wishes to continue in ministry, and both the Incumbent and PCC agree, application should be made to the Registrar for Permission to Officiate. This is usually given for three years initially, renewable for a further three years and thereafter one year at a time. PTO may also be given in special cases; for example to an LLM licensed in a neighbouring diocese whose ministry extends into this Diocese.
2. An LLM may not exercise authorised ministry in this Diocese without either a current licence from the Bishop, or Permission to Officiate.

Reader Emeritus

1. An LLM who has retired, but who has given considerable service to the ministry may be recommended to the Bishop by the Incumbent and PCC through the Readers' Board to be considered for the honorary title of Reader Emeritus.

Diocesan LLM (Readers') Board

1. The Warden is supported by the Diocesan LLM (Readers') Board elected at the AGM which is open to all licensed Readers in the Diocese. The Warden and Registrar are always ready to listen and help if any Reader feels the need for pastoral support either in their ministry or otherwise.

Reports to: The Incumbent of this parish

Agreement: I agree to being an LLM in the parish of All Saints Guildford, under the governance structures of the Incumbent and the PCC.

- I agree to read and adhere to all aspects of the All Saints Safeguarding Policy, including recruitment and training requirements:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/PromotingSaferChurchWeb.pdf>

- I agree to read and adhere to the Church of England's Parish Safeguarding Handbook:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/ParishSafeGuardingHandBookAugust2019Web.pdf>

- I agree to meet up with the Incumbent annually, for individual support and supervision.

Name (print and sign): _____

Incumbent signature: _____

Date: _____

Form updated June 2022. Form updated November 2022. Form updated April 2024.