

Preparing for training

If you hope to train as a licensed lay minister (LLM) you will need to have completed some foundation studies by the time the course begins in September each year.

For many people this will mean completing the diocesan Bishop's Certificate course. This is held in different places around the diocese each year, usually beginning in the autumn. Contact the Old Palace for details so that you can plan to join a group in good time. The diocesan Authorised Lay Ministry (ALM) course also counts as a foundation year. Some candidates may have undertaken other forms of adult Christian learning — please ask the Warden whether this might count as a suitable alternative. You can be exploring licensed lay ministry whilst taking the Bishop's Certificate or an ALM course.

LLM training takes place over 6 terms and is delivered in partnership with The Queen's Foundation theological college in Birmingham. There are weekly term-time sessions on Tuesday evenings at Queen's, plus one residential weekend or whole Saturday session each term in the diocese, usually at Holland House, near Pershore. Students have a course tutor who supports them in their studies and ministerial development. Home churches are involved by helping to provide opportunities for practical experience, such as in preaching and leading worship. Students also undertake a placement.

Candidates usually need to be able to complete their training by the age of 70. There is no charge for the training course, but home churches are encouraged to consider how they can support LLMs in training, practically, spiritually and financially.

Contacts

For all initial enquiries about LLM

The Revd Sue Oliver, Warden of Readers
St Mark's Vicarage
Vicarage Lane
Pensnett
West Midlands DY5 4JH
01384 261558
sueoliver778@gmail.com

For Bishop's Certificate information

Ministry & Discipleship Administrator
The Old Palace, Deansway
Worcester WR1 2JE
01905 732812
training@cofe-worcester.org.uk

Dudley Archdeaconry Warden

Kath Davis
84 Station Road
Cradley Heath
B64 6NU
01384 564026
kath.davis@btinternet.com

Worcester Archdeaconry Warden

The Revd Canon Nick Wright
6 St Davids Drive
Evesham WR11 2AU
01386 443310
revnmwright@btinternet.com

Reader Roadshows

Roadshows are held around the diocese each Spring. They are an opportunity to meet informally with other enquirers and with LLMs to find out more. Contact the Warden for details.

Diocese of Worcester

LICENSED LAY MINISTRY

(Reader Ministry)



**A short guide for all who
are exploring their calling**



Kingdom People

love • compassion • justice • freedom

Who, what and why?

Licensed lay ministers (LLMs) are people from all walks of life, who have recognised God's grace and call in their lives and whose gifts have been affirmed by their local church as well as by the diocese. LLMs are part of the nationally recognised and accredited public ministry of the Church of England.

LLMs are theologically trained, equipped to reflect and minister in the light of scripture, prayer and knowledge of the world. They are called to help others think with clarity about God and faith, about where he is at work in their lives, in their communities and in the wider world.

The heart of the role is a ministry focused on the word of God which connects word and world, faith and life. Within this LLMs will offer a wide variety of service according to their gifts and circumstances — pastoral, teaching (adults or children), evangelistic, community-based, or on the 'edge' of the church with people enquiring about faith, or in 'fresh expressions' of church. Many LLMs are also engaged in funeral ministry. They will be passionate about sharing in God's mission, living the life of the Kingdom and working in partnership with ordained and lay colleagues, encouraging the gifts, discipleship and ministry of others.

LLMs are lay leaders and enablers in their church communities, offering a model of Christian discipleship to the people they meet in daily life, as well as in their congregations. In changing times the church requires imaginative ministers who can be flexible, open and responsive to new demands and opportunities in both church and society, helping those around them relate creatively to God's loving mission.

Is this for you? Exploring further

- ❖ Talk to your parish clergy (or rural dean if your parish is in vacancy) and to the lay leaders in your church community about your ideas and sense of calling.
- ❖ Find out more from LLMs in your own parish or deanery. If you don't know any locally we can put you in touch.
- ❖ Think about going to a Reader Roadshow.
- ❖ Contact the Warden of Readers for an informal conversation. At an appropriate time the Warden can guide you through a process of exploration and discernment based on the national selection criteria for this ministry. This may include meeting with advisors to help you think about your gifts and calling, some reading and reflection, and the possibility of visiting different churches or meeting serving LLMs. This exploration is always tailored to the needs of each person. To give time for these discussions you should make contact with the Warden as early in your thinking as possible, and certainly in the autumn of the year before you might hope to start training.
- ❖ Continue with your prayers and reading about vocation and ministry. Why not ask other people to join you in praying and thinking about vocation, yours and theirs? Or perhaps a 'soul friend' might be of help — ask your parish clergy, the Warden or your Archdeaconry Warden about spiritual guides and companions.
- ❖ When it becomes clear that this is the right ministry to pursue, you will be put in touch with your Archdeaconry Warden to talk more about selection and training. They will guide you into the final stage of the discernment process. The diocesan discernment and selection day brings together all LLM candidates for a whole Saturday and is usually held in the Spring. Candidates are selected for training, not for admission as Readers, since vocational discernment continues throughout the two years of training and formation.
- ❖ As part of your application for LLM selection your PCC(s) and parish clergy (or equivalent) will be asked to offer their formal support and also to outline the ministry you might exercise. You will be asked to supply other referees too.
- ❖ Should you and your advisers feel that LLM is not the right path for you at any stage then the Warden and/or Archdeaconry Warden will help you discern the best way forward — it may be that another ministry awaits you.
- ❖ For more information about Licensed Lay Ministry in Worcester diocese and in the Church of England visit
www.cofe-worcester.org.uk
www.readers.cofe.anglican.org