

## C. Guidelines on Leading Worship

1. The Church of England recognises clergy and Readers who are licensed in the Diocese as having primary responsibility for leading public worship and preaching.
2. Licensed clergy and Readers who take services and preach are responsible for the content, format and presentation of those services.
3. Any suitable person can read the lessons or lead the intercessory prayers at the invitation of the incumbent, the clergy or Reader leading worship, or in period of vacancy, the church warden. [B11.1]
4. Canon law allows space for others (not licensed) to be invited to preach [B18.2]. This provision is intended for occasional use: taking more than five or six services a year would not usually be considered 'occasional' preaching.
5. Occasional preachers, the content, format and presentation of their preaching, are the responsibility of the Incumbent or church warden who has invited them to preach.
6. All those who preach, whether occasionally or regularly, should continue to study the Bible, theology and the world as part of their commitment to proclaiming the word of God.
7. Those occasional preachers who have had no formal training in preaching, should be encouraged to work through the relevant short courses available at <http://www.lichfield.anglican.org/ourdiocese/training-development-for-lay-people/> or attend training for occasional preachers provided in their area.
8. In situations where no licensed clergy or Reader are available to lead worship and preach, and where no occasional preacher is available, any suitable person may read the service and use one of the reflections for worship available at <http://www.lichfield.anglican.org/>
9. Reader Ministry is distinct from 'occasional preaching' in the following ways:
  - Readers are called to serve a long-term ministry of leading worship, preaching and proclaiming the Word of God. This will usually involve a Reader preaching regularly, over many years. They need to be equipped for regular preaching and to sustain that ministry through investing in continued ministerial development.
  - Readers are "Lay theologians" who bring the Word of the Lord to the world. Their bridging ministry extends beyond the church into their community, workplace, etc.
  - Readers take on a leadership role within their parish. They have a formal role as public ministers of the Church, which stretches beyond their own community

- Readers represent both the local and the national Church. It is a national ministry with a local expression.
- Leading worship and preaching are only one aspect of Reader ministry, which may include a range of other aspects, such as pastoral care, leading bible studies, community activities, etc.

## 10. Relevant Canons

### **Canon B11 Of Morning and Evening Prayer in parish churches**

1. Morning and Evening Prayer shall be said or sung in every parish church at least on all Sundays and other principal Feast Days, and also on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Each service shall be said or sung distinctly, reverently, and in an audible voice. Readers, such other lay persons as may be authorized by the bishop of the diocese, or some other suitable lay person, may, at the invitation of the minister of the parish or, where the cure is vacant or the minister is incapacitated, at the invitation of the churchwardens say or sing Morning and Evening Prayer (save for the Absolution).

### **Canon B 18 Of sermons in parish churches**

1. In every parish church a sermon shall be preached at least once each Sunday, except for some reasonable cause approved by the bishop of the diocese.
2. The sermon shall be preached by a minister, deaconess, reader or lay worker duly authorized in accordance with Canon Law. At the invitation of the minister having the cure of souls another person may preach with the permission of the bishop of the diocese given either in relation to the particular occasion or in accordance with diocesan directions.
3. The preacher shall endeavour with care and sincerity to minister the word of truth, to the glory of God and to the edification of the people.

### **B 6 Of Sundays and other days of special observance**

1. The Lord's Day, commonly called Sunday, is ever to be celebrated as a weekly memorial of our Lord's Resurrection and kept according to God's holy will and pleasure, particularly by attendance at divine service, by deeds of charity, and by abstention from all unnecessary labour and business.
2. The principal Feasts which are to be observed in the Church of England are Christmas Day, Epiphany, the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Easter Day, Ascension Day, Whitsunday or Pentecost, Trinity Sunday and All Saints' Day.
3. The Days of Fasting or Abstinence and the Vigils which are to be observed in the Church of England are set out in The Book of Common

Prayer, whereof the 40 days of Lent, particularly Ash Wednesday and the Monday to Saturday before Easter, ought specially to be observed.

4. Good Friday is ever to be observed by prayer with meditation on the death and Passion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by self discipline, and by attendance at divine service.

5. It is lawful for the General Synod to approve Holy Days which may be observed generally or provincially, and, subject to any directions of the Convocation of the province, for the Ordinary to approve Holy Days which may be observed locally.

### **B 12 Of the ministry of the Holy Communion**

1. No person shall consecrate and administer the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper unless he shall have been ordained priest by episcopal ordination in accordance with the provisions of Canon C 1.

2. Every minister, as often as he shall celebrate the Holy Communion, shall receive that sacrament himself.

3. No person shall distribute the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper to the people unless he shall have been ordained in accordance with the provisions of Canon C 1, or is otherwise authorized by Canon or unless he has been specially authorized to do so by the bishop acting under such regulations as the General Synod may make from time to time.

4. Subject to the general directions of the bishop, the Epistle and the Gospel and the Prayer of Intercession may at the invitation of the minister be read by a lay person at the celebration of the Holy Communion.