1. Introduction

Welcome to the Training Handbook for members of the Diocese of Oxford who are working towards diocesan authorisation in relation to Preaching, leading services of Communion by Extension, or Lay Funeral Ministry. The purpose of this handbook is to outline current training requirements for each of these authorised ministries within the diocese, and signpost various resources to help you meet these requirements.

As such, you will find here:

1. current learning requirements for those with authorisation to either preach, lead services of Communion by Extension or engage in Funeral ministry;
2. details of suggested learning assignments;
3. booklists and signposts to various other resources you will find helpful in your initial and on-going learning.

Current information on how the Authorised Ministry Scheme actually operates, how to go about becoming authorised and guidance on ‘who needs to do what when’ will be found at: https://www.oxford.anglican.org/mission-ministry/lay-authorised-ministry/diocesan-authorised-ministries/

Learning Opportunities

Far from being a hurdle over which to make people jump, on-going learning is vital for feeding both our heads and our hearts. The purpose of this training is to equip ministers of the gospel who are enabled and envisioned to tell the story of God and join in with his work and mission in the world.

While there are indeed some basic, minimum expectations (detailed in this handbook) which you will need to fulfill in order to obtain ongoing Authorisation, this does not mean your learning has to stop there! Quite apart from what is initially required, you are strongly encouraged to give continued attention to your ongoing development in discipleship, theological learning and practical skills – whether through personal or group study, attending further courses, or online learning. This is good for us all, and good for the Church. The bishop will be delighted to hear of your ongoing learning when the time comes for renewal of authorisation.

Areas particularly worthy of attention are Bible, Spirituality, Preaching, Communion (Eucharist), Worship and Pastoral Care. Or you may equally want to explore some of our popular courses in (e.g.) mission and evangelism, discipleship, church history and doctrine. Details of all current and upcoming courses offered by the diocese can be found at http://www.oxford.anglican.org/our-faith/lifelong-learning/

At a more local level, preaching (or ministry) team meetings in the parish/benefice can be enormously beneficial when these include a significant element of reflecting and learning together. Equally, structured supervision with your incumbent (or other appropriate person) is an invaluable way to grow in skill, learning and confidence.

Questions

We hope your learning experiences will be both enriching and fulfilling. Should any questions arise, however, do please be in touch with the training department through:

- Revd Dr Phil Cooke
  - phil.cooke@oxford.anglican.org
  - (01865) 208282
2. Training requirements

Please refer below to the guidance relevant to each area of ministry you are exploring. If you are engaged in more than one ministry, each of which requires formal authorisation in its own right (for example, if you also preach when leading services of Communion by Extension), you will need to request each authorisation separately from your bishop, and fulfil training requirements for each in order for these to then be renewed following the initial two year periods.

If you are able to demonstrate that you have already acquired equivalent learning you may be exempted from all or part of any related requirements. For example, if you have been on a course and produced work which was assessed at the appropriate level, this can be quite straightforward. Accurately assessing levels of private study and personal experience can be more challenging, but it may nevertheless still be possible to take some of this into account. In such cases, it is evidence of the learning which is considered, rather than simply the amount of training attended or experience in and of itself.

a. For those with authorisation to Preach

NB. A person authorised to preach may do so only when invited by the incumbent, and it is entirely a matter for the incumbent’s discretion when this should be.

In order for your authorisation to be renewed at the end of the initial two-year period, you will need to…

1. Provide evidence of your attendance at a course on preaching which is either offered by the diocese, or locally run and recognised by the diocese; or run by another appropriate institution (e.g. one of the Oxford theological colleges) and accredited at level 4 (i.e. equivalent to the level of courses in the first year of LLM training) or above.

2. Submit for assessment
   - three sermons (for each either a full text, an audio recording, a video recording, or reasonably full notes)
   - feedback on each of these sermons from others (a sample feedback form is provided on p.16, though alternative templates are acceptable).
   - an assignment of 1500 words (or equivalent) at level 4 evidencing your understanding of preaching. This assignment will often derive from the course attended, though alternatives may be agreed with the training department.
   - A paragraph or two reflecting on the feedback you have received and what you have learned from this.
All authorisations (whether initial or for renewal) are also dependent upon you holding a valid Enhanced DBS Disclosure, and upon completion of required Safeguarding training (currently the ‘Leadership’ Safeguarding Learning Pathway which replaced ‘C3’ in 2020).

Assignment titles
For the 1500-word assignment, you may attempt any assignment from the preaching course you attend, or maybe one of the following:

1. What’s the difference between preaching and teaching?
2. Is there still a place for preaching in Christian worship today? Answer with reference to biblical, theological and cultural perspectives.
3. What makes preaching ‘biblical’?
4. What Biblical models inform contemporary preaching?
5. Why preach?
6. Using three of your sermons, show how the way you preach reflects your understanding of preaching – or how your understanding of preaching has changed.

Be sure to reference at least one or two books on preaching (see suggested reading below for ideas). You will need to reference more if submitting this for a formal academic award.

b. For those with authorisation to lead services of Communion by Extension

NB. This scheme concerns only public worship services which include Communion by Extension. (It applies neither to taking communion to the sick or housebound, nor to administering the chalice in a ‘normal’ communion service - both of which no longer require permission from a bishop, but agreement of the local PCC).

- Only those people authorised by the bishop and invited to do so by the parish incumbent may lead services of Communion by Extension.
- Services of Communion by Extension may only take place when specifically authorised by the bishop. When a person is authorised to lead these services such authorisation extends only to those occasions authorised by the bishop.
- Services of communion by extension must always be conducted in accordance with the authorised liturgy, including the notes to this, and the House of Bishops guidelines.¹

¹ See https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/Public%20Worship%20with%20Communion%20by%20Extension.pdf (pp.32-33)
If you are to preach at such services, you should also obtain the bishop’s authorisation to preach, and fulfil the appropriate learning requirements in addition to those for leading services of communion by extension.

In order for your Authorisation to be renewed at the end of the initial two-year period, you will need to...

1. Provide evidence of your attendance at a course on Communion by Extension which is either offered by the diocese, or approved by the diocese (please check before booking on courses offered elsewhere to ensure they will qualify as ‘recognised’ for the purposes of training for authorised ministry).

2. Submit for assessment
   - evidence from your leading of two services of Communion by Extension (e.g. service outline, leader’s notes)
   - feedback from others on the way you planned & conducted these services (a sample feedback form is provided on p.17, though alternative templates are acceptable).
   - an assignment of 1500 words (or more) at level 4 demonstrating your understanding of Communion by Extension. This assignment will often be part of the course attended, though alternatives may be agreed with the training department.
   - A paragraph or two reflecting on the feedback you have received and what you have learned from this.

All authorisations (whether initial or for renewal) are also dependent upon you holding a valid Enhanced DBS Disclosure, and upon completion of required Safeguarding training (currently the ‘Leadership’ Safeguarding Learning Pathway which replaced ‘C3’ in 2020).

Assignment titles
For the 1500-word assignment, you may attempt any assignment from the course you attend, or one of the following:

1. What are the key differences in theology and practice between the Eucharist and services of Communion by Extension?

2. Write an article for your Parish Magazine, outlining the key features of a service of Communion by Extension. Explain how and why your parish uses (or might consider using) such services, taking care to highlight the distinctive practice and theology of Communion by Extension.

3. Write a commentary on the Common Worship liturgy for services of Communion by Extension, noting in particular key points of liturgical, theological and practical significance.

Be sure to reference at least one or two books on Communion by Extension (see suggested reading below for ideas). You will need to reference more if submitting this for an academic award.
c. For those with authorisation for Lay Funeral Ministry

NB. A person authorised for Lay Funeral Ministry becomes part of a team, led by the incumbent, to whom you will be accountable. Funerals may only be conducted with the Incumbent’s permission and, of course, with the agreement of the family of the deceased.

- Your incumbent and PCC must also have a formally agreed policy on pastoral practice firmly in place
- Further, you will need to put together a working agreement with your Incumbent which is reviewed on a regular basis.

In order for your Authorisation to be renewed at the end of the initial training period (up to 2 years), you will need to …

1. Provide evidence of your attendance at approved training courses in:
   a. **Pastoral Care** (formal diocesan courses run in alternate summer terms (2021, 2023…) over 10 weekday evenings).
   b. **Funeral Ministry** (diocesan provision is usually run each Spring or Summer term, over the course of two Saturday mornings)

   While most authorised ministry candidates attend the courses offered directly by the diocese, appropriate courses run locally (eg by church or deanery) and recognised by the diocese as adequate for the purposes of this scheme may also qualify. Alternatively, relevant courses run by other appropriate institutions (e.g. the national church or one of the Oxford theological colleges) and accredited at level 4 (i.e. equivalent to the level of courses in the first year of LLM training) or above would normally also be acceptable – please just ask.

2. Submit for assessment
   a. evidence of your leading and participation in two funeral services (e.g. service outline, leaders’ notes, sermon)
   b. feedback from other ministers (letters from family members and/or funeral directors may also be included if appropriate). A sample feedback form is provided on p.17, which may adapted for more specific use.
   c. a paragraph or two reflecting on the feedback you have received and what you have learned from this.
   d. an assignment of 2500 words (at level 4) from the Pastoral Care course, demonstrating your understanding of pastoral care.
   e. a further assignment of 2500 words (at level 4) from the Funeral Ministry course, demonstrating your understanding of funeral ministry.

3. Review
   a. your funeral ministry working agreement within the parish or benefice
   b. your parish’s pastoral care policy (the responsibility of Incumbent and PCC).
4. Demonstrate
   a. the continued support of your incumbent and PCC
   b. your ongoing commitment to relevant learning/training

All authorisations (whether initial or for renewal) are also dependent upon you holding a valid Enhanced DBS Disclosure, and upon completion of required Safeguarding training (currently the ‘Leadership’ Safeguarding Learning Pathway which replaced ‘C3’ in 2020).

Assignment titles (Funeral ministry)

Attempt either one of these assignments or an alternative title from the course you attend.

1. Evaluate your church’s pastoral care of the bereaved in the light of biblical and theological perspectives on death. How might it be developed?
2. Explore the biblical and theological background of funerals and how an awareness of this might best inform the pastoral outcomes of this pastoral office.
3. Interview five people, including a funeral director, to ascertain what they believe to be the purpose of a funeral and what they are expecting in the service and from the service. Discuss the differences and similarities with the Common Worship funeral liturgies.
4. Write a reflective account of a funeral that you have been involved with. Which aspects of theology and pastoral care were in evidence?
5. Who is the funeral for – and why?

Be sure to reference at least one or two books for each assignment (see suggested reading below – and also more comprehensive bibliographies from courses you attend - for ideas). You will need to reference more if submitting work for an academic award.
3. Submitting evidence and assignments

Submission of evidence for assessment should be made to the Training Department. Please ask us for precise details of who to submit your work to at the time.

Format
- Paper or emailed electronic copies are perfectly acceptable.
- It is helpful for work to be typed; but handwritten work will be accepted if it is clearly legible.
- If sermons are recorded, please ensure that recording quality is such that what you say can be heard above any background noise.
- Assignments already marked by course tutors should be submitted together with the marker’s comments.
- If you would like any hard copy of written work, CD-rom or memory sticks to be returned, please be sure to label clearly and include a stamped-addressed envelope.
- Alternatives to written assignments may be negotiated when this is appropriate.

Feedback - the feedback you provide with your work for assessment should normally include comment from your supervising minister, members of your ministry team and a selection of people from the congregations among whom you minister.

Feedback can come in many forms. Some people are happy to simply write in response to a general request for ‘some comments’ on (e.g.) a particular sermon or your preaching in general; others will prefer more specific guidance on the sort of things on which you are asking them to reflect. You may want to give a list of particular questions for people to answer, or you may prefer to ask for comment on things like content, delivery, length, capacity to maintain interest etc. Sample forms are given towards the end of this handbook. These are meant to be illustrative rather than prescriptive, and are offered here as suggestions to help you elicit feedback which is both helpful and specific. Experience shows that offering some guidance leads to more focused and meaningful feedback.

Creativity
Please do use your assignments to demonstrate the knowledge you gain and the things you learn from your training and ministry. The point is not to regurgitate answers in any given mold, but to encourage good reflective learning that shows something of how you have engaged with both the theological tradition and your own ministry context.

4. Help with producing assignments

In writing an assignment, the most important thing is to answer the question that has been set. So pay careful attention to the wording of the question, and to any other instructions given about it.

Likewise pay careful attention to the expected length of the assignment. Some tutors regard this as a maximum, others as guidance – if it is not made clear which applies for your course, ask
the tutor. There is not normally a minimum length – but if you write a lot less than the suggested length, you may well not have covered all that you need to.

The marker will be looking for you to state your views – but expects to see those views informed by the course and by the reading and other work you have done to produce the assignment. So the marker will be looking particularly to see what evidence or argument you give for what you think. Connected to this, the marker will be looking for you to show that you are aware of other views and why you don’t agree with them.

You need to think about the structure of what you produce. Each paragraph should focus on one issue, and the paragraphs should flow in a sensible order. Generally there should be an introduction to explain where the assignment is going, and a conclusion to sum up what has been argued.

The best way to find out more about what is expected is to just have a go at producing an assignment. Many people find they are pleasantly surprised by the result. But if the result isn’t what you hope, the tutor will explain how you could have done better and you will be welcome to have another go – or to use the feedback to help you with any further learning. If in doubt, ask the tutor – they (and we) are there to help.

Referencing
All work at this level should really be referenced properly. This is partly about acknowledging your debt to the thinking of others. It is also about demonstrating that you have engaged with wider reading and considered what others have said about the issues you are discussing.

For this reason it is important to include in your work reference to any books, website articles or other media which have helped shape the point you are making. This is especially important when quoting directly from someone else’s work or drawing on facts, figures or key ideas quoted in their publications.

If you are completing assignments as part of an academic award there are certain referencing protocols that must be followed. Details of these protocols (a version of the ‘Harvard’ referencing system) can be found at:
http://www.oxford.anglican.org/mission-ministry/training-for-ministry/diocesan-authorised-ministries/

Most learners authorised to preach, lead services of communion by extension, or conduct funerals are not registered for a formal academic award. Nevertheless, if you are completing an assignment from one of our taught courses, tutors will normally expect assignments for marking to be submitted according to this same referencing system; so it is probably just as easy to adopt the same scheme. The crucial thing, though, is that all referencing is clear and consistent, and demonstrates that you have explored some relevant literature.
5. Learning resources & suggested reading

Moodle - VLE
A number of book chapters, videos and other learning resources are available on ‘Moodle’, our diocesan Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Please ask for access to Moodle by emailing navita.singh@oxford.anglican.org explaining that you are training for authorised ministry and need access to the relevant learning resources.

Suggested reading

Health warnings:

1. These are simply lists of things to select from, not in any way an indication of how much you need to read! Equally you may find other resources helpful that are not included here but which explore areas in which you have a particular interest, or which you might simply find on a friend’s or colleague’s bookshelf…

2. All books and websites have particular viewpoints to a greater or lesser extent. Until you know the viewpoint of any source, always read more than one before taking their views as your own!

Preaching and Preachers

Bruce, K., 2015. Igniting the Heart: Preaching and Imagination. London: SCM.
Heywood, D., 2013. Transforming Preaching: The sermon as a channel for God’s word. London: SPCK.

**Grove Booklets (good introductory booklets)**


**Some useful websites**

**The Text this Week  [www.textweek.com](http://www.textweek.com)**

*This contains links to a wide range of online resources for any Bible passage in the Revised Common Lectionary (on which the Church of England’s lectionary is based).*


*A searchable collection of Bible translations (in many languages; 20 English versions), can be searched by reference, key words or topic.*
Oremus Bible Browser [http://bible.oremus.org/]
  Good for NRSV with uncluttered webpages.

Christian Classics Ethereal Library [http://www.ccel.org/]
  A very large collection of the classic Christian texts online. Particularly the Church Fathers and the Worldwide Study Bible which categorises various study aids by biblical books.

Working Preacher – where interpretation meets imagination
  [http://www.workingpreacher.org/]
  This site, which is both American and Lutheran, provides some useful ideas provided one applies both trans-Atlantic and denominational filters.

Word and World [http://www2.luthersem.edu/word2world/]
  A journal of theology, which includes a number of articles on preaching (as well as many others on the Bible and theological topics).

If you want to read / hear / watch sermon examples, amongst many other sites you could try:
  [http://www.allsouls.org/Media/AllMedia.aspx]
  [http://www.stpauls.co.uk/Worship-Music/Join-us-in-Worship/Read-Sermons]
  [http://www.ntwrightpage.com/#ntw]
  [https://repository.duke.edu/dc/dukechapel]
  [https://www.youtube.com/user/30GoodMinutes/videos]

Communion by Extension


Grove Booklets (good introductory booklets)


Funeral ministry

Death, Bereavement and Grief
Gooder, P. 2015. Where on earth is Heaven? London: SPCK.
Slater, V. & Collicutt, J., 2013. Living Well in the End Times (LWET): a project to research and support churches’ engagement with issues of death and dying. Practical Theology, 11:2, 176-188.
Funerals
Chadwick, C. & Tovey, P. How to Prepare and Conduct a Funeral. Cambridge: Grove [W221]

Anthologies on Grief
Whitaker, A., ed., 1989. All in the End is Harvest. London: DLT.

Pastoral Care (general)


### Engaging with the Bible


Useful websites include:
- [http://www.ntgateway.com](http://www.ntgateway.com)
- [http://www.otgateway.com](http://www.otgateway.com)
- [http://www.textweek.com/](http://www.textweek.com/)

**Ministries and ministry**

*There is a vast literature on ministry and different ministries. Here, though, are just a few examples you may find helpful as you grow in the ministry into which God is calling you.*


Sample Feedback Form

Preaching

Name of Preacher:

Date and Place of sermon:  
Type of service or other context:

1. What would you say was the main point of this sermon? (What was it about? What was its aim? (If unclear, please indicate this)

2. How would you rate the following (1= weak, 5= excellent):
   - Delivery
   - Attention
   - Length

3. Please give any further reflections on
   - Delivery (Could you hear sufficiently? Was the pace about right? Was there enough eye contact? Any helpful or unhelpful gestures? Did they hold your attention…?)
   - Content (sermon length; use of story, humour & illustration; level of preparation; sufficient clarity of structure?)
   - Context (Was the sermon appropriate for the occasion, and for the make-up of congregation?)
   - Application (What impact did the sermon have on you? How did it relate to your everyday life? Were you inspired? encouraged? challenged to act? given cause to think?)

4. What were the main strengths of this sermon?

5. What one thing would you encourage the preacher to do differently another time?

6. What is the main thing you will take away from this sermon?

7. Any other comments?

Thank you.
Sample Feedback Form
Leading Worship

Name of Service leader:  Type of service or other context:

Date and Place:  Congregation size:

1. **Audibility:** how well could you hear what was said?  (1= weak, 5= excellent):
   
   Difficult to hear  1  2  3  4  5  Easy to hear

2. **Prayerfulness:** was there a sense of specialness of worship?
   
   Not that prayerful  1  2  3  4  5  Very conducive to worship

3. **Fluency in liturgical leadership & choreography:** how well was the service conducted?
   
   Disjointed/Unsettling  1  2  3  4  5  Fluent, secure, convincing

4. **Planning/Service design:** Were the component parts appropriate for type of service/congregation?  Did everything hang together sufficiently?  If not, where and why?
   
   Jumbled mess  1  2  3  4  5  Clarity of liturgical journey

5. **Organisation/Preparation:** Was everything adequately organised and prepared?
   
   Disorganised  1  2  3  4  5  Just right

6. **What were the main strengths of this service?**

7. **What one thing might you encourage the student to do differently another time?**

8. **(if appropriate) How easy did you find this student to work with?**

9. **Any other comments?**  (please continue of reverse if necessary)

   Thank you.