

Lay Pastoral Assistant Concluding Session: Going Forward

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In this session we will be covering ...

Review of the course

What have we learned – what do we still need to learn?

Preparing to be commissioned

Written Reflection, Ministry Specification and Request to Commission

Safeguarding

Introduction to safeguarding requirements

The Commissioning

At your service!

Welcome to the session

We take a few moments to greet one another and catch up on any news

Prayer

The course leader prays for the group and asks God's blessing on the session

Then we pray together

**Lord Jesus, teach us that you have no body now on earth but ours;
No hands but ours;
No feet but ours;
Ours are the eyes through which your compassion
Must look out upon the world;
Ours are the feet with which you
Must go about doing good;
Ours are the hands with which you
Must bless men, women and children now;
For your name's sake.
Amen.**

Review of the course

What have we learned?

In pairs or threes or as a group, share experiences of the course.

- What was easy?
- What was difficult?
- What were the most important things you learned?
- Did anything surprise you? About the content? About yourself?

How green am I now?

At the beginning of the course you reflected on the variety of gifts you brought from your life experiences, work, and faith. Fill in this grid again (without looking at the one from session one!) and then compare them both. What has been added that will benefit future potential ministry?

Gifts

Skills

Experience

Networks

Share your reflections with the group.

What do we still need to learn?

The Lay Pastoral Assistant training course is an introductory course designed to get you started. If you go on to be Commissioned, we hope you will want to go deeper into some areas, depending on the kind of ministry you are going to exercise. Details of Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD) opportunities are on the Diocesan website. These are provided free of charge for all those exercising a licensed or commissioned ministry in the name of the Diocese. Each year there will be some events which are particularly relevant to Lay Pastoral Assistants, including more about the Bible, prayer, understanding depression, developing listening skills etc.

Have a look at what's available. We would be glad to hear any suggestions for things you would like to see in the programme in future.

Using a group for support and ongoing learning

As you begin to exercise the ministry of a Lay Pastoral Assistant don't forget the importance of being supported in your role. You may find it helpful to meet with other LPAs, and also your incumbent for mutual support, sharing difficult situations (with appropriate confidentiality) and developing skills.

As you grow in confidence and understanding and become more aware of your own distinctive gifts you may even feel drawn to explore a further call to ministry. Your incumbent or someone from the Diocesan Vocations team will be happy to help you reflect on this.



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Learning checklist

Not every Lay Pastoral Assistant will get involved in every kind of pastoral activity. Much depends on the needs of the church and communities where you serve. Below are some of the things you could find yourself doing – or perhaps you are already doing them? You may find it helpful to keep track of your experiential learning in this way.

Activity	Date and place	How did it go? <i>From my point of view</i>	How did it go? <i>Feedback from others</i>
I explained the role of a Lay Pastoral Assistant To someone I know To a church group			
I visited someone in their home			
I used the pastoral cycle to help me with a particular visit/situation			
I used a new way of praying in my private prayer time			
I visited someone in hospital			
I prayed with someone			
I spoke with someone about the Christian faith			
I supported someone preparing for the end of their life			

Activity	Date and place	How did it go? <i>From my point of view</i>	How did it go? <i>Feedback from others</i>
I helped a school group explore the church building and its ministry			
I participated in a CMD event			
Other			

Preparing to be commissioned

Written Reflection and Commissioning Forms

We hope you will want to keep your copy of the Lay Pastoral Assistant training material for future reference together with your preparation material for each session and any notes you took during the course. They are for your own use.

In the ‘Taster’ Session we asked the question: ‘Is God calling me to be a Lay Pastoral Assistant?’ Becoming a Lay Pastoral Assistant is not just about taking on a responsibility or doing a job but it is about responding to a call to ministry. Hopefully taking part in the course has helped you to reflect further on this and to reach a deeper insight into whether or not you feel called to serve the Church in this way.



As part of this period of reflection you will need to meet with your incumbent and we suggest that a written reflection ‘**Why I believe God is calling me to the ministry of a Lay Pastoral Assistant**’ would be helpful. This needs to be *up* to 2 sides of A4 and if this feels difficult for any reason feel free to use other formats. The important thing is that you have reflected with your incumbent concerning this potential ministry, so that you and your incumbent can decide whether it is now right for you to proceed. We also ask you to complete a Ministry Specification with your incumbent. The purpose of the Ministry Specification is to scope and agree what kind of ministry you will exercise. It is important that you, your incumbent, the PCC,

and members of the church community all understand what the expectations are. The Ministry Specification is to ensure that your ministry is regularly used but not over used, that you are appropriately supported through supervision and opportunities to carry on learning, and that your Commission is kept up to date.

Exactly what you are asked to do week by week is for you to negotiate with your incumbent and it may well be that your ministry evolves and changes over time. If the nature of your ministry changes in any major way you should draw up a fresh Ministry Specification but otherwise it is fine to renew it every three years when you need to be re commissioned.

Safeguarding

As a Lay Pastoral Assistant you are a public minister of the Church. You may come into contact with children and vulnerable adults as part of your ministry. You will be seen as a trusted person and people may bring their pastoral concerns regarding safeguarding to you. If this happens it is vital that you know what to do.

Remember you need to have a **DBS Enhanced Child and Adult workforce check with barring check for Child and Adult** and also complete **Basic Awareness (C0), Foundation (C1)**, and Awareness of Domestic Abuse safeguarding training. The Diocese will keep a record on our central Database (SalDims) that you have completed these requirements which also will be visible to your PCC via your Parish Safeguarding officer (PSO) to ensure your DBS & safeguarding is always kept up-to-date.

Remember you cannot be commissioned without a valid DBS and Basic awareness/Foundation safeguarding training completed.

Please Note: *Your DBS and safeguarding training needs renewing every 3 years.*

It is important to remember that at any time your Commission is only valid if your DBS check and safeguarding training are up to date and the Diocese has a record of this. If you have any questions or concerns, you should always speak to either your PSO or contact the Parish Support team parishsupport@salisbury.anglican.org or 01722 411922.

The Commissioning Service

You may already have a date for the Commissioning Service or if not it will be arranged soon. Your group may be commissioned all together or this may happen more locally. There is an outline form of service for the Commissioning of Lay Pastoral Assistants with some opportunities for those being commissioned to contribute and also take part in the service. If there is time in this session the group may want to look at the service and think about what you might like to offer.

Thank you and farewell

Course participants may like to take this opportunity to thank the course leader(s) and one another for the learning you have done together ...

Gives yourselves a round of applause!



The course leader closes with prayer, ending with the Grace

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all evermore.
Amen**

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