



Certified Lay Ministry

Applicant’s Packet

**What is a Certified Lay Minister (CLM)?**

A certified lay minister is a certified lay servant or certified lay missioner, who is called and equipped to:

* conduct public worship
* care for the congregation
* assist in program leadership
* develop new and existing faith communities
* preach the Word
* lead small groups
* establish community outreach ministries
* serves as a Class Leader
* engages in specialized ministries after appropriate training such as in parish nursing and church planting

A certified lay minister serves as part of a ministry team with the supervision and support of a clergyperson and is assigned by a district superintendent in accordance with ¶419.2 (2016 BOD ¶268)

The certified lay minister serves to enhance the quality of ministry, much like a class leader did in early Methodism, through service in the local church, circuit, or cooperative parish, or by expanding team ministry in other churches and charges. As with lay ministry in early Methodism, the certified lay minister uses his or her spiritual gifts as evidence of God’s grace.

**Who should consider beginning the application process and coursework for Certified Lay Ministry?**

Perhaps you have considered being more involved in mission and ministry in the past, but wanted to remain in the community where you live as a faithful servant. Perhaps you are the one others look toward for leadership, perhaps you are comfortable sharing your faith story, or you could be discerning the service to which God is calling you. Have you ever asked yourself, “Could God be calling me to be a leader in mission and ministry?” Have you read “The Christian as Minister”? Have you had a conversation with your pastor? Certified Lay Ministry may be an appropriate response for you at this time.

**What do I need to do to become a Certified Lay Minister?**

You need to complete the following requirements:

1. Be certified as a **lay servant or lay missioner**.
2. Meet with your pastor.
3. Meet with your SPRC.
4. Meet with your District Superintendent.
5. Complete the Certified Lay Ministry application and submit it to your District Committee on Ordained Ministry.
6. Obtain written recommendation from the pastor and the church council or charge conference of the local church in which you hold membership.
7. Complete a background screening for criminal records search, sex offender records search, credit report search and driver’s license report prior to the completion of Module 1.
8. Complete a track of study for certified lay ministers relevant to your assignment as defined by Discipleship Ministries and the Upper New York Conference Committee on Lay Servant Ministries. The current track of study is Modules 1 – 4 from Discipleship Ministries **or** Modules 1 – 4 on BeADisciple.com.
9. Receive a letter of recommendation from your district superintendent.
10. Have all requirements for certification, including background check, reviewed by the **District Committee on Ordained Ministry** for examination of persons who have applied in writing to be certified lay ministers and to make recommendation for certification (see 2016 BOD ¶666.11). After an interview with you, the District Committee on Ordained Ministry will make a recommendation to the Conference Committee on Lay Servant Ministries for final certification by that committee.

**Step 1:**

* An individual who is interested in becoming a Certified Lay Minister should meet with his/her pastor to discuss and discern his/her call and interest and desire for this ministry.
* Read The Christian as Minister and discuss your sense of calling with your pastor.
* The pastor submits a request in writing to the district superintendent to identify a time to meet with the SPRC, church council chair and pastor to discuss the needs of the church and the suitability of the person’s gifts as a candidate for Certified Lay Ministry within the local church or the ministry setting that the applicant feels called to.
* The applicant must demonstrate the basic knowledge of the history, polity, doctrine, worship and liturgy of the United Methodist Church.

**Step 2:**

* Applicant downloads the following forms: Application Form, Biographical Information and the Pastor’s Recommendation Form.
* Applicant completes appropriate forms and obtains appropriate signatures before submitting the forms to their District Committee on Ordained Ministry
* Applicant downloads Pastor’s Information Packet and provides his/her pastor with a copy.
* Pastor completes and sends the Pastor’s Recommendation Form to the District Committee on Ministry.

**Step 3:**

* Coursework – Once the applicant has been accepted into the course of study, he/she must register for Module 1 (either online or a course being offered in one of the Upper New York Districts)
* After successful completion of Module 1, the applicant will need to meet with his/her pastor to develop a mutual ministry agreement and covenant.
* Modules **must be** taken in sequential order.
* The applicant will receive a certificate of completion after each Module has been successfully completed. Please keep these as you will need to provide copies for proof of completion.

**Step 4:**

* After successful completion of all the required coursework (Modules 1 through 4) the applicant is to request a meeting with the local church SPRC and pastor for approval of the student to become a CLM Candidate.
* The SPRC will present their approved candidate at the next scheduled church council or charge conference and sign the Affirmation Form.
  + The Affirmation Form is signed by the SPRC chair, church council chair and the pastor.
  + The signed Affirmation Form must be sent to the District Committee on Ministry (DCOM).

**Step 5:**

* The approved CLM candidate is to contact his/her DCOM chair to request an interview and to provide him/her with any additional requirements necessary for the interview. The CLM candidate is to appear before DCOM for an interview.
* Once the CLM candidate is approved by the DCOM he/she will be recommended to the Conference Committee on Lay Servant Ministries (CCLSM) for certification.
* The CCLSM will affirm the candidate as a Certified Lay Minister based on the recommendation of the DCOM and a certificate of certification will be provided.
* The CLM will be added to the next report of the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOOM) that is submitted to the Annual Conference.
* A CLM is to preach the Word, provide care ministry to the congregation assist in program leadership, and be a witness in the community as part of a ministry team with the supervision and support of a clergyperson. A CLM may be assigned by his/her District Superintendent to lead public worship, care for the congregation, assist in program leadership, develop new and existing faith communities, preach the Word, lead small groups, or establish community outreach ministries as part of a ministry team with the supervision and support of a clergyperson. A CLM may be assigned to do the work of ministry in a local charge if there is not an ordained or licensed minister available (see 2016 BOD ¶205.4)
* A CLM is assigned to a church and **is not** appointed to a church by a district superintendent in accordance with 2016 BOD ¶419.2

**Note:** A Certified Lay Minister has no clergy rights or benefits (2016 BOD ¶268.6). A CLM cannot consecrate the elements of Holy Communion or officiate the Sacrament of Baptism – these sacramental ministries must be provided by an ordained or licensed minister who is appointed to oversee the charge (2016 BOD ¶205.4)

**How do I maintain status as a Certified Lay Minister?**

1. Submit an annual report to the charge conference or church council where membership is held and to the CCLSM giving evidence of satisfactory performance as a CLM.
2. Every two years, obtain a ministry review by the SPRC, church council, or charge conference from the congregation of which you are a member, or when under assignment, from the SPRC, church council, charge conference or supervisory board of the ministry setting in which you are assigned.
3. Complete at least one lay servant ministries advance course or approved continuing education event, as defined by the CCLSM in the last two years.
4. Obtain recommendation for recertification from the District Superintendent.
5. Have all requirements for recertification reviewed by the DCOM as follows:
   1. Letter of recommendation from District Superintendent
   2. Copy of Annual Reports submitted and approved at charge conference
   3. Apply in writing asking to be renewed and request an interview. (see 2016 BOD ¶666.10)
6. After the District Committee on Ordained Ministry interviews you, the DCOM will make a recommendation to the Conference Committee on Lay Servant Ministries for final recertification by that committee.

**How and when do I submit for an Upper New York Conference background screening?**

The CLM Applicant is required to submit for a background screening before the completion of Module 1 and before registering for Module 2.

* The required background screening includes a criminal records search, sex offender records search, a credit report search and a driver’s license report.
* The CLM applicant is to contact your DCOM. The applicant is responsible for the screening fee of $80.00.

**What are the “Questions for Candidates”?**

The questions that should be asked by the pastor and the SPRC to the applicant can be found on page 96-98 of The Christian as Minister.

**What is the Pastor Recommendation process?**

* The applicant is to meet with the pastor to discuss his/her sense of calling.
* The pastor will request a meeting with the District Superintendent to include the pastor, members of SPRC, church council and the applicant to discuss the needs of the church, and the suitability of the person’s gifts as a candidate for the certified lay ministry program with the local church or outside ministry setting.
* The pastor will sign the applicant’s application form.
* The pastor will complete and sign the Pastor’s Recommendation. The signed Pastor’s Recommendation form is to be mailed to the District Committee on Ordained Ministry.
* The pastor is part of the Commitment and Covenant through the applicant’s course of study and process.



**Certified Lay Ministry Process** – Adopted Legislation at 2016 General Conference

(For more details please see *Certified Lay Ministry Applicants Packet*)

**As part of a ministry team with supervision and support of a clergyperson:**

* Conducts public worship
* Cares for the congregation
* Develops new faith communities
* Preaches the Word
* Leads small groups
* Establishes outreach ministries
* Serves as a class leader
* Engages in specialized ministries after appropriate training

**REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION:**

* Certified as a lay servant, lay missioner
* Pastor and church council or charge conference recommendation
* Completion of a track of study as defined in ¶268 2016 Book of Discipline
* District Superintendent recommendation
* Appropriate screening & assessment
* Conference committee on Lay Servant Ministries approval after interview with and recommendation from district committee on Ordained Ministry

**REQUIREMENTS FOR RENEWAL:**

* Annual report
* Pastor and church council or charge conference recommendation
* Ministry review
* Lay Servant Ministries advanced course or approved continuing education event annually
* District Superintendent recommendation
* Conference committee on Lay Servant Ministries approval every two years after interview with and recommendation from district committee on Ordained Ministry