



CUMBRIA
CHRISTIAN
LEARNING

Growing disciples for mission

Local Lay Ministry and commissioning

Could it be right for you?

What is a Local Lay Minister?

Someone who is called by God, trained by the Church, and commissioned by the Bishop to exercise a particular ministry within their parish/benefice on behalf of their local church.

It is voluntary lay ministry, and there is no age limit.

Each Local Lay Minister has a unique and specific role, which depends on their gifts and the needs of the parish, benefice or Mission Community.

It generally involves leadership responsibility for some aspect of the church's work – perhaps pastoral, organisational or mission-focussed. Often the person is already doing this, but would benefit from training and public authorisation.

Local Lay Ministers are put forward by their Vicar and PCC, to be trained on a tailor-made diocesan programme.

The commissioning can take place at any point during the training.

Local Lay Ministers join a specific ministry team, alongside Licensed Ministers (Readers, Clergy, etc.). A successful parish or Mission Community can have several Local Lay Ministers.

Local Lay Ministry is a special initiative within the Carlisle Diocese.

What does a Local Lay Minister do?

Whatever serves God and builds His Kingdom. It could be almost anything!
Here are some examples of the particular roles of existing Local Lay Ministers:

- Overseeing a visiting team in the parish, local hospital or residential homes
- Organising some service to the local community on behalf of the church
- Evangelism and outreach
- Leading home groups, study groups, seeker courses, etc.
- Responsibility for working with a particular age group (e.g. youth, young families, the elderly)
- Pastoral involvement in baptisms or funerals
- Helping to lead worship, develop music, speak about faith, etc.

Each Local Lay Minister is specially commissioned to their particular role, which appears in brackets as part of their 'title', for example:

“Local Lay Minister (Pastoral Co-ordinator)”,
or **“Local Lay Minister (Outreach Team Leader)”**.

Could it be you?

Yes! . . . if you long to serve God more fully, and are:

- a committed member of your local Anglican church
- already serving God and exercising responsibility for some aspect of the Church's work
- convinced that training and official authorisation would enable you to do this work more effectively
- willing to train for this ministry.

How is a commissioned 'Local Lay Minister' different from a 'Licensed Lay Minister' (Reader)?

They are both authorised forms of voluntary lay ministry.

A 'Licensed Lay Minister' (Reader) is primarily called "to lead worship, preach and teach" . Therefore Reader training involves fairly intensive theological and biblical study over two or three years.

The training to become a commissioned 'Local Lay Minister' is mainly practical; does not involve assessed written work; requires less time and is spread out over four years.

If you are clearly gifted and called to preach and lead worship, and wish to do so regularly/frequently, you should train as a Licensed Lay Minister (Reader).

To start exploring Local Lay Ministry

Pray that God will help you to know whether you are being called to this ministry.

Consider the demands on your life and the training involved.

Talk with your Vicar / Minister to explore your calling and clarify what your particular role might be.

Discuss your ideas and feelings with your family, friends, and other members of your church.

Contact one of Cumbria Christian Learning's Vocations Co-ordinators:

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The Training Programme

The relevant PCC's agreement should be given by the end of June to start training in the autumn. Your PCC is expected to support you by paying the course fees (about £60 per year).

Local Lay Ministry training is spread over four years. It is very flexible and is shaped to suit your needs and your role. The training can happen in any order:

1. Most people do the "Called To Serve" course (21 sessions over a year) as a way of discerning and clarifying their ministry. If they decide to go ahead as a Local Lay Minister, then "Called to Serve" is counted as having been the first of the 4 years of training.
2. Everyone does the Core Course (four Saturday day-conferences) with other Local Lay Ministers, usually in the second or first year of training.
3. The other two years of training are "tailor-made" and consist of several short courses, relevant to your specific role (minimum 16 hours total per year).

There will be plenty of support and encouragement, learning practical ministry skills and helping you to grow in the kind of understanding, character and spiritual maturity needed for lay leadership.

You are usually expected to gain DBS (safeguarding) clearance.

For further information, please contact:

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