

Lay Worship Leaders

Overview

Lay Worship Leaders (LWLs) lead services in parishes and benefices, within a diocesan framework which includes authorisation, initial training, commissioning, further training and supervision. Potential LWLs are identified through shared discernment with their incumbent and PCC. This discernment takes place prior to enrolment on an LWL course, initiated by the incumbent or the potential LWL.

The ministry of a Lay Worship Leader

LWLs are trained and authorised to lead acts of corporate worship as part of a wider team, including team-led services. Their ministry will vary according to context, gifts and experience. This may include any of the following:

- Morning and Evening Prayer
- Matins and Evensong
- Services of the Word
- All age, children's and youth services
- Café church, fresh expressions and pioneer worship
- Other Common Worship Services (eg special occasions)

Unlike Readers, LWLs are not trained to preach. Instead, they are equipped to make creative use of the 'sermon slot', through *Pause for Thought* training.

Permission and selection

Under the diocesan LWL scheme approved by the Bishop, LWLs lead under the authority and supervision of the incumbent, with the agreement and permission of the PCC. This is different to Readers, who have a ministry in the wider church (recognised explicitly by canon) and are licensed by the Bishop to carry out their ministry.

Course details

LWL training is spread across three terms, usually split into eight weeks before Christmas, eight weeks after Christmas and six to eight weeks in the summer term.

- Term One gives an overview of the theology of worship, so participants can consider why we worship and why different elements of worship are important. Two weeks are dedicated to understanding the liturgy as we explore Common Worship and how it can be used confidently and creatively.
- Term Two covers more practical aspects of leading worship, including All Age services and use of audio visual equipment effectively
- Term three includes local commissioning, when LWLs can begin their ministry. Course sessions focus on producing and leading *Pause for Thought* in place of a sermon, based on the scriptures set for the day

There are no formally assessed assignments, but participants are asked to complete three worship audits in their parish and to create and deliver a *Pause for Thought* item.

Further course details are available below.

Commissioning and working agreements

Commissioning will take place locally during the third term in a service of public worship, usually at the season of Pentecost. In addition, on successful completion of the course, participants will receive a certificate.

LWLs will discuss the nature and scope of their role with their incumbent and a working agreement drawn up. This will be reviewed annually.

Supervision, support and in-serving training

The incumbent is responsible for ensuring there is regular supervision and appropriate mentoring of LWLs in their charge, with LWLs functioning as members of a local team. In addition, LWLs will be encouraged to join a wider learning community of LWLs and engage in in-service training, making use of opportunities available on the diocesan Digital Learning Platform. With the support of their incumbent, some LWLs may wish to attend a *Train the Trainer Course*, to assist in future delivery of LWL training.

Further LWL course details

Course sessions will usually cover the following areas

- Theology of worship
- Who is the God we worship
- Worship in the Old Testament
- Worship in the New Testament
- Worship in the Psalms
- Music in worship
- Patterns of Anglican worship 1
- Patterns of Anglican worship 2
- Corporate prayer and prayer stations
- All age worship
- Worship in a mission context
- Creativity in worship
- Using audio visual technology
- Leading a congregation in worship
- Leadership styles
- Building a team
- Pause for Thought: lectio divina and drama
- Pause for Thought: liquid worship and cafe discussions
- Pause for Thought: guided meditation and art / crafts
- Pause for Thought: group work

To take this further

- Incumbents meet with potential LWLs to discern whether this an appropriate pathway
- Details of LWL courses, including application instructions can be found as follows:
 - Visit the Digital Learning Platform:
Go to: <https://learning.leeds.anglican.org/> ; then browse or click on 'Ministry Pathways' or type 'worship leading' in 'Start Learning'.
 - Alternatively email Carol Stenner on carol.stenner@leeds.anglican.org