



## **Licensed Lay Preacher Training Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina**

### **Invitation to Discernment**

The Diocese of North Carolina invites applicants for our lay preaching program, a one-year course of reading, writing, preaching, and attending classes in preparation for certification (at the bishop's discretion) as a Licensed Lay Preacher.

The goal of the LPTI is to develop a robust cadre of lay preachers drawn from within their local communities. By training and supporting lay preachers in the Episcopal Church the program aims to establish lay preaching and lay leadership as a fourth dimension of diocesan leadership in the Episcopal Church alongside bishops, priests, and deacons.

Lay preaching is a call discerned in community. In our worship, preaching is a moment of proclamation and of invitation to draw closer to God's love. In this process of discernment, it is important to remember that a calling to preach is also a calling to prayer and to study. We encourage you to spend time in prayer and in reading scripture during a time of discernment.

Jeremiah 29:11 says, "I know the plans I have in mind for you, declares the Lord; they are plans for peace, not disaster, to give you a future filled with hope."

We pray you will rest in hope, knowing God is at work within you, and that your diocesan family is supporting you in this process.

We are looking for people who are comfortable speaking in public, thoughtful about their spirituality, prayerful, with a Biblical studies experience and active in an Episcopal congregation. Participants should be organized and motivated to direct their own learning and willing to participate in the course.

We are a diverse diocese. A lay preaching program would equip a wider range of our congregations and members to hear preaching directly in their own voice. We value the beautiful diversity within our church and welcome people who bring these parts of their lives and experiences into the preaching environment.

### **Summary:**

#### **Prerequisites**

- Candidates for enrollment need have some type of education in Scripture, though it does not have to be formal training. We simply need to know what experiences of Bible studies, biblical teaching or biblical training you have had. Examples of training might include (this is not a comprehensive list) local Bible Studies, Education for Ministry,

Church Next, CALL courses, The Iona Collaborative, online courses, Academia de Liderazgo or similar programs.

- Candidates should have had participation in a training in racial sensitivity, cultural diversity and inclusion, such as Beloved Community Sacred Ground circle, Dismantling Racism. Opportunities to participate in these programs are offered throughout the year, and can be completed during this course.
- Be recommended by their local clergy and a lay person. If you do not have a clergy in your parish, ask a clergy person, regional canon or diocesan missionary with whom you have a relationship to complete the recommendation.

#### **Training Preachers includes:**

- A program of active, reflective learning leading to learning, growth, and mastery in the art of preaching the Gospel
- A program leading to Licensure as a lay preacher
- An immersion in both the theoretical foundations and the regular practice of preaching
- An opportunity to learn from peers and practitioners

#### **Our hopes for the Diocese:**

- A way to enrich the preaching of the Gospel throughout the Diocese by welcoming different voices, perspectives, and experiences to our preaching
- An expansion of Lay Ministry into a key leadership role
- A way to provide excellent preaching in a variety of contexts and circumstances, especially smaller congregations, and churches in need.
- To equip lay preachers from diverse backgrounds and experiences
- To deploy lay preachers into a variety of churches – lay preachers in this program will have the capacity to serve in their local congregation as well as to other congregations who may have a need.

#### **What can you expect if you are trained?**

- A person who completes this program will be fully equipped and licensed to preach locally in their congregation and available to preach in other congregations and settings.
- To be challenged, blessed, and to grow spiritually as you engage your faith and the scriptures within church communities.

#### **Sometimes it is helpful to name what a Lay Preaching Program is not:**

##### **For preachers it is NOT**

- A preparation for ordination
- A chance to tell the Church what it should think or do about issues important to you
- An in-depth course in Biblical studies (we expect that preachers will already have a working knowledge of scripture through a program like EfM)

##### **For the Diocese it is NOT**

- A replacement for preaching by the ordained
- A “second best” option for smaller, less resourced congregations

## About the Lay Preaching Training

The Lay Preaching Training is one year and provides participants with opportunities to study, discuss, and practice preaching.

### Training Includes:

- **Weekly assignments/ activities-** videos, reading, journaling and spiritual practices 1 ½ - 2 ½ hours a week
- **Evening Zoom Meetings-** 1 ½ hours once a month
- **In-Person Training** – once a month – 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM – The cohort will meet with the diocesan trainers to learn, practice and grow in ministry together. The location for the in-person sessions will be determined once the cohort is established.

### Tuition

The majority of the training cost is covered by the generous grant. Once accepted into the program, participants will be asked to contribute to the cost of the program as they are able. The cost of the program is \$400 per year. All required books will be provided by the diocese and mailed to each participant in the program.

### Training Dates

It is expected that participants will attend classes each year and fully engage in assignments and activities. Before making application, the following class dates should be reviewed for availability:

#### **2024 -**

One Zoom meeting per month  
One in per Saturday per month  
Dates TBD

Teaching and practical application engaging students in analysis, critique, hands-on learning exercises, and some preaching.

### Application Timeline:

- **Lay Preacher Course Informational Gathering on Zoom-** Monday, Oct 23, 6:30 PM (Optional) This will provide information on the program, as well as time for prayer and discernment and time to ask questions. The meeting will be recorded and available for people who are interested. [Register here](#).
- **Applications Open** – September 19 – November 15
- **Applications and Recommendations (Clergy and Lay) due by Nov. 15 via the [online application form](#).**
- **Acceptance Decision:** Decision notifications will be emailed to each participant with a copy to the recommending clergy person by Dec. 1.
- Training Year 1 begins Jan. 2024.

**Questions**

Please join us for the informational zoom meeting on Monday, Oct 23, 6:30 PM via [this link on Zoom](#).

Questions can be emailed to the Rev. Earnest Graham, Canon Missioner [earnest.graham@episdionc.org](mailto:earnest.graham@episdionc.org) or Jenny Beaumont, Missioner for Adult and Life-Long Formation [jenny.beaumont@episdionc.org](mailto:jenny.beaumont@episdionc.org).

# Application for Lay Preaching Program

(paper version to prepare – application are via the online portal-

**Applications and Recommendations (Clergy and Lay) due by Nov. 15 via the [online application form](#).**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Current Parish \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Place Confirmed or Received in the Episcopal Church \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Email \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation and Brief Description of Responsibilities \_\_\_\_\_

Educational Background \_\_\_\_\_

Tell us about your Bible studies or training you have had. This can be through EFM, Church Next, CALL courses through CDSP, The Iona Collaborative, online courses from VTS or other Episcopal Seminaries, Academia de Liderazgo or equivalent program.

Which ministry experiences have been meaningful for you?

What is it that you hope to gain from this training?

Tell us about experiences, persons, reading, etc., that have inspired your faith.

Tell about challenges to your faith, practice, or institutional trust.

What other Experiences of Leadership, Interest, Expertise is applicable to your call to preaching?

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### **References**

Please provide 2 references from:

1. Your parish priest –Note: If your parish is currently without a priest, choose an Episcopal clergyperson who knows you well enough to recommend you.
2. Lay person who knows you well.

Sample reference forms are below

## Lay Preacher Reference: Clergy Form

Submit electronically to the applicant Applications and Recommendations (Clergy and Lay) due by **Nov. 15** via the [online application form](#).

Applicant Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Title/Parish \_\_\_\_\_  
Parish Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Please write a reference letter no longer than 2 pages in length which includes (but is not limited to) your impressions of the following:

- How well you know the applicant, for how long, and in what context(s).
- The applicant's depth and quality of personal and theological reflection.
- The applicant's degree of self-motivation, follow-through, self-direction and diligence.
- The applicant's capacity for and manner of communication, written and oral, including the use of shared language and experience.
- Characteristics, including "intangibles" which lead you to recommend this person as a potential licensed preacher of the Gospel.

If you have any further questions or comments, please be in touch with Jenny Beaumont, mission for Adult and life-long formation [jenny.beaumont@episdionc.org](mailto:jenny.beaumont@episdionc.org) or Rev. Earnest Graham, Canon for Regional Ministry [earnest.graham@episdionc.org](mailto:earnest.graham@episdionc.org).

## **Lay Preacher Reference: Lay Recommender Form**

**Submit electronically to the applicant Applications and Recommendations (Clergy and Lay) due by Nov. 15 via the [online application form](#).**

Applicant Name \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title/Parish \_\_\_\_\_

Your Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Please write a reference letter no longer than 2 pages in length which includes (but is not limited to) the following:

- How well you know the applicant, for how long, and in what context(s).
- Your reasons for believing this person would make an effective and faithful licensed preacher of the Gospel. Please include your impressions and give examples of the applicant in terms of the following:

Reliability; willingness to take responsibility; consistency and follow-through

Effectiveness as a communicator, public speaker, writer (if applicable)

Role and quality of presence within the life of the parish

Anything else, including “intangibles” which you would like to mention

If you have any further questions or comments, please be in touch with Jenny Beaumont, mission for Adult and life-long formation [jenny.beaumont@episdionc.org](mailto:jenny.beaumont@episdionc.org) or Rev. Earnest Graham, Canon for Regional Ministry [earnest.graham@episdionc.org](mailto:earnest.graham@episdionc.org).