



# Lay Academy for Church Excellence



# What Is L.A.C.E?

L.A.C.E. is the Leadership Academy for Church Excellence. Our new format offers something for everyone!

## Various Workshops/Classes

These classes are designed to foster ongoing growth in church leadership, service and personal discipleship. This is great for those who wish to continue maturing in their faith but are not seeking any certification. Participants can take any of the various classes that are offered without any restriction. The class choices are totally up to the participant and include the workshops, LACE 101, LACE 201 and LACE 301.

## LACE 101

LACE 101 is designed to teach and equip people to be servant leaders in their church. The focus is on instilling confidence to lead in one's own church. If a participant completes this group of classes, they will be eligible to receive the designation of Certified Lay Servant if desired. A participant would complete the Basic Course for Lay Servant Ministries booklet which is a 10 hour course broken up into 2 all day sessions and the Leadership Course.

Those wishing to obtain Certified Lay Speaker status should first complete the Basic Course for Lay Servant Ministries (also called LACE 101). Participants are not required to take all of the courses in the same year. If certification as Certified Lay Speaker is desired, it will be granted upon completion of the courses.

## LACE 301

The LACE 301 classes are open to everyone. Those wishing to obtain Certified Lay Minister status should first complete the Certified Lay Servant and Certified Lay Speaker requirements. LACE 301 includes the following three courses provided by the Conference that will be livestreamed out to the district events:

- Faith Formation/Discipleship
- Pastoral Care
- Congregational Context



### Certified Lay Servant

A **certified lay servant** serves the local church or charge (and/or beyond) and:

- provides program leadership, assistance, and support.
- leads meetings for prayer, training, study, and discussion.
- conducts, or assists in conducting, services of worship, preaches the Word, or gives addresses.
- provides congregational and community leadership and fosters caring ministries.
- assists in the distribution of the elements of Holy Communion.
- teaches the Scriptures, doctrine, organization, and ministries of The United Methodist Church.

### Certified Lay Speaker

A **certified lay speaker** serves by preaching the Word when requested by the pastor, district superintendent, or committee on lay servant ministries in accordance and compliance with ¶341.1 of *The Book of Discipline*.

The role of a certified lay speaker is a specific calling for the ministry of pulpit supply.

### Certified Lay Minister

A **certified lay minister** serves as part of a ministry team with the supervision and support of a clergy person and:

- 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.
- assists in program leadership.
- engages in specialized ministries after appropriate training such as in parish nursing, church planting, men's ministry, children's faith formation, congregational care, and more.

# What Is a Lay Servant?

A lay servant is someone who has accepted God's call to the laity to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ, who then go and make other disciples in their churches and communities. The LACE series is designed to equip and empower laity as leaders in their churches.

The United Methodist Church has established three categories for laypersons in the area of lay servant ministries to develop, prepare, and engage principled Christian leaders for the mission of making disciples for the transformation of the world:

- Certified Lay Servant
- Certified Lay Speaker
- Certified Lay Minister

## Certified Lay Servant

A certified lay servant is a professing member of a local church or charge or a baptized participant of a recognized United Methodist collegiate ministry or other United Methodist ministry setting who desires to serve the church and who knows and is committed to Scripture and the doctrine, heritage, organization, and life of The United Methodist Church. This is a person who has received specific training to witness to the Christian faith through spoken communication, to lead within a church and community, and to provide caring ministry. The certified lay servant serves the local church or charge (or beyond the local church or charge) in ways in which his or her witness, leadership, and service inspires others to a deeper commitment to Christ and more effective discipleship. The certified lay servant, through continued study and training, should prepare to undertake one or more of the following functions, giving primary attention to service within the local church or charge, United Methodist collegiate ministry, or other United Methodist ministry setting:

- Provide leadership, assistance, and support to the program emphases of the church or other United Methodist ministry.
- Lead meetings for prayer, training, study, and discussion when requested by the pastor, district superintendent, or committee on lay servant ministries.
- Conduct, or assist in conducting, services of worship, preach the Word, or give addresses when requested by the pastor, district superintendent, or committee on lay servant ministries.
- Work with appropriate committees and teams that provide congregational and community leadership or foster caring ministries.
- Assist in the distribution of the elements of Holy Communion upon request by a pastor.
- Teach the Scriptures, doctrine, organization, and ministries of The United Methodist Church.

To become a Certified Lay Servant, you must:

1. Obtain recommendation from the pastor and the charge conference of the local church or other United Methodist ministry in which you hold membership.
2. Complete LACE 101.

3. Apply to and have qualifications reviewed by the district committee on lay servant ministries (See ¶668.3).

To maintain status as a Certified Lay Servant, you must:

1. Submit an annual report and renewal application to the charge conference and to the district committee on lay servant ministries, giving evidence of satisfactory performance as a certified lay servant.
2. Obtain recommendation for renewal from the pastor and the charge conference of the local church or other United Methodist ministry in which you hold membership.

## **Certified Lay Speaker**

A certified lay speaker is a certified lay servant (or equivalent as defined by his or her central conference) whose call has been affirmed by the conference committee on lay servant ministries or equivalent structure to serve the church in pulpit supply in accordance and compliance with ¶341.1. The certified lay speaker serves by preaching the Word when requested by the pastor, district superintendent, or committee on lay servant ministries, in accordance and compliance with ¶341.1.

To become a Certified Lay Speaker, you must:

1. Be certified as a Certified Lay Servant.
2. Obtain recommendation from the pastor and the charge conference of the local church in which you hold membership.
3. Complete a track of study (LACE 201) including courses on leading worship, leading prayer, discovering spiritual gifts, preaching, United Methodist heritage and polity, and/ or other courses as determined by the conference committee on lay servant ministries.
4. Interview with and obtain recommendation from the district committee on lay servant ministries, or equivalent structure, to be submitted to the conference committee on lay servant ministries, for approval and certification.

To maintain status as a Certified Lay Speaker, you must:

1. Submit an annual report and renewal application to the charge conference and to the district committee on lay servant ministries, giving evidence of satisfactory performance as a certified lay speaker.
2. Obtain recommendation for continued recognition as a certified lay speaker from the pastor and the charge conference of the local church or other United Methodist ministry in which you hold membership.
3. Complete a lay servant ministries advanced course in the last three years.

## **Certified Lay Minister**

A certified lay minister is a certified lay servant or certified lay missionary (or equivalent as defined by his or her central conference), 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, or establish community outreach ministries as part of a ministry team with

the supervision and support of a clergy person. A certified lay minister is assigned by a district superintendent in accordance with ¶419.2. 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.

### **What if I miss a session or can't re-certify?**

If you are due for recertification and cannot commit to attending due to personal circumstances, we can waive the requirement for a year. Please let the Ministry Coordinator or the District Lay Leader know about your circumstances in order to be given the waiver.

## **Lay Servants in Ministry**

The reason why the root of the terms for laity ministry in our district are "lay servant" is because it's more all-encompassing term for what our lay servants do.

### **Supporting the Pastor**

The pastor of your church can't do ministry alone. For him or her to try is like trying to roll a car up a hill alone - pretty soon the exhaustion means the car will roll backwards ... and often right over the pastor. Lay servants get training and knowledge that help them support the pastor in ministry by:

- Taking on church leadership positions, such as a committee chair or becoming the Lay Leader
- Teaching Sunday School or Bible Study
- Launching and leading a new ministry in the church, such as prison ministry, nursing home ministry, college ministry and so much more.

### **Serving in the District and Conference**

There are also ways that you can serve at the District or Conference level, in addition to preaching. Just like your pastor can't do everything alone, we need laity to serve on committees and be part of ministry at the District and Conference level. If you're interested in serving, talk with our District Superintendent, Ministry Coordinator, or District Lay Leader. We can help you find a place to serve that fits your gifts and graces!

# Laity Sunday

Laity Sunday is usually celebrated on the third Sunday of October. This day is set aside to recognize and affirm the ministry of the laity. Ministries of the laity include: lay leaders, lay servants, lay speakers, lay ministers, lay missionaries, deaconesses, home missionaries, United Methodist Women, United Methodist Men, Walks to Emmaus, Chrysalis, missionary service, and many other significant forms of ministry.

## *To Pastors:*

We encourage you to choose a Sunday to celebrate the laity in your church. If you have a lay servant in your congregation, invite them to preach! Involve the laity throughout the service in prayers, scripture reading, and preaching. This is a great opportunity for lay servants to use both their gifts and LACE training.

## *To Laity:*

Talk with your pastor about the possibility of having a Laity Sunday, and if you are willing to preach for the pastor, make sure they know you are available whenever they need you.

## **Resources**

<http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/leadership-resources/ministry-of-the-laity>

<http://www.kyumc.org/layservantministries>

<https://connectionalcafe.com>