

## Lay Ministry Institute....Report for Synod Assembly 2022

Greetings to all for our 2022 Upper Susquehanna Synod Assembly

Together let us journey towards God's love and Grace and may we live in his abundance!

The Lay Ministry Institute is in the process of changing, redeveloping and going forward with plans for starting a new class for Authorized Lay Worship Leaders. We as a Board feel the need to educate and prepare more, and new leaders who can step forward and help serve the congregations of this Synod.

As candidates share their gifts of faith, we pledge to educate and prepare them to lead Sunday worship services across the Synod.

We are now seeking people who feel called to serve the church by engaging in further education with Biblical studies, the history of the church and worship leadership; and, after completion of the requirements, to commit to serve the church faithfully. Those who feel the call of Jesus Christ's Church, and who have the support of their pastor and congregation, can fill out the online application, which is located on our synod website ([www.uss-elca.org](http://www.uss-elca.org)). Once the application is submitted, candidates will be contacted to schedule a meeting with members of the board for an entrance interview. Included in this report is a 10-Step document that briefly outlines the process for becoming an Authorized Lay Worship Leader from start to finish.

The Lay Ministry Institute will be undergoing more changes as the year progresses. We are coordinating our program with those of the Allegheny and Northwest PA Synods, who are also in the process of restructuring their lay worship leader programs.

Our joint classes will take place on Zoom so students have easier access to the classes. We also plan to have continuing education classes available for existing ALWLs or for anyone who would enjoy learning more about the Bible, the Church, and God's call to mission.

Information on the classes and how you can sign up for them will be coming in the near future. Check your USS Ark regularly for updates!

You can also check with any Board member for updates.

### Board Members:

Bishop Collins

SAM Jim Girven

ALWL Harry Deitz

ALWL Wendy Davis

SAM Diane Booth Bubb

ALWL Lowell Leitzel

Rev. Gretchen Johansson

Vicar Mindy Bartholomew

ALWL Mark Giesen

ALWL Donna Batschelet

ALWL Barbara Horn

Rev. Curt Wingert

## **Lay Ministry Institute Authorized Lay Worship Leader Training**

### **Step by Step Process**

1. Potential Candidate speaks with their pastor to receive support and willingness to serve as a mentor throughout this process. Congregation is also asked for their support of the candidate in this process.
  - a. Pastor provides a written recommendation for the candidate.
  - b. Congregation Council provides a written recommendation for the candidate.
2. Candidate completes the fillable application, which is available on the Upper Susquehanna Synod's website, and other required references and clearances.
3. Following submission of the application, references and clearances, the candidate will meet with three to four members of the Lay Ministry Institute Board for a face-to-face interview.
4. If approved, a member of the board will be assigned to serve as a relator to the candidate throughout their training process.
5. The board will invite approved candidates to a welcome gathering to meet the full Lay Ministry Board and other candidates in process.
  - a. Process and expectations will be reviewed.
  - b. Course layout and requirements will be reviewed.
  - c. Other learning opportunities will be shared.
6. The candidate will have a file, maintained at the synod office to include:
  - a. All paperwork related to the application process.
  - b. Tracking of course participation and evaluation of completion.
  - c. Communications from candidate, board, mentor, congregation, etc.
7. There are five areas of required coursework, available mostly online:
  - a. Old Testament (12 hours)
  - b. New Testament (12 hours)
  - c. Lutheran History/Theology (12 hours)
  - d. Worship Leadership (12 hours)
  - e. Preaching (12 hours)
8. Additional Practicum, in person, will take place every four months (three times throughout the process) to review how the candidate is applying and incorporating their learning to lay leadership.
9. After completion of all course requirements, the candidate will meet with members of the board for a final evaluation and decision for approval or denial to be authorized to serve in this lay ministry.
10. Following approval, the candidate will be inducted to serve in this role during a worship service in their home congregation.