

Growing into ministry in the Diocesan context: Licensed Ministers (LMs) and Ordination.

Roles

- Licensed Minister (Reader)
- Licensed Minister (Pastor/Chaplain)
- Licensed Minister (Youth/Childrens/Family Minister)
- Licensed Minister (Evangelist)
- Deacon Priest (NSM, NSML and Stipendiary)

Role descriptions

All licensed ministers, lay and ordained, are expected to work together with each other to enable the ministry of the whole church as part of shared ministry teams within mission areas.

Licensed Minister (Reader)

Readers are called by God to be examples of those who are bearers and interpreters of the Word. This will include leading public worship, preaching and teaching the Word.

In doing so, the aim is to inspire greater commitment to discipleship.

Through study of the scriptures and the teaching of the church, and within the context of disciplined prayer, Readers are called to give an account of the hope and the faith that is within them and to help others to do the same.

Readers have the privilege of leading public worship and will need to be skilled in doing so in relation to different types of congregation and in a style appropriate to the context.

The Reader's skills in liturgy and leading worship may mean that they are called upon to share such gifts on a wider canvass than the Reader's own local church or ministry area.

Readers are authorised to preach and to preside at Services of the Word and may according to local need, lead ministries of teaching and fostering discipleship, such as Sunday School leading, Bible Study leading, catechesis and confirmation preparation and leading faith development and evangelistic courses.

With additional training, Readers may be authorised to conduct funerals.

They are authorised to take home communion in contexts outside the church, such as nursing homes. With suitable discernment and training, Readers may also exercise the ministry of a Pastoral Assistant as described above. As Pastoral ministry is an extension of Christian love nurtured in discipleship and the calling of all Christian people, it is therefore a natural part of the ministry of every Reader.

However Readers with a particular calling and gifting to take oversight for Pastoral work in a community or area might seek ordination to the Diaconate.

Readers need to be able to work effectively and collaboratively alongside clergy and other lay ministers, Readers can and will play a key role in enabling the successful development of varied patterns of ministry in differing contexts, including ministry areas.

Reader Ministry is by its very nature a collaborative one. Reader Ministry is a vocation. Such a ministry expresses a response to Christ and will therefore always be about much more than doing tasks. Rather, it is about 'being' – a discipleship that is first and foremost lived out within the context of daily life.

Licensed Pastoral Minister (may also be termed Chaplain)

Pastoral Ministers are called to focus and enable the work of pastoral practice within the local church and should be rooted in its collaborative working practice.

The work of the Pastoral Minister will depend on the gifts and skills of the individual and the needs of the local church, but they are called to:

- Challenge the church to care for the world as Christ does
- Undertake specific tasks of pastoral care
- Work with statutory and voluntary agencies to provide care in the community
- Enable the church to express Christ's ministry of healing and wholeness
- Be competent in the use of appropriate liturgical forms in support of this work
- Work collaboratively with, and by agreement with the incumbent, have oversight of,
- Enable and encourage the pastoral ministry of other members of the church, particularly pastoral assistants.

They are authorised to take communion to individuals or in locations such as nursing homes. They are authorised to anoint the sick and conduct a healing ministry.

With additional training, Pastoral Ministers may be authorised to conduct funerals. They are not authorised to preach or preside at other public services, but may be separately commissioned as Worship Leaders.

Pastors with a calling and gifting to preach might properly seek ordination as a Deacon.

Where the Pastoral Minister is responsible for, or is part of the representative team that is responsible for, pastoral care to a particular community, such as a school, hospice or hospital or community organisation, the Pastoral Minister might properly be called a Chaplain.

In such contexts, with suitable discernment and training, the Chaplain might be licensed to preach in that context.

An additional form of Pastoral Minister is the **Parish Nurse**. This is a ministry supported by Parish Nursing Ministries UK and is open to registered nurses with some community experience. They are called to focus and enable the healing ministry of the church by providing whole person health care through the local Church.

The parish nurse is called to:

- Focus and enable the healing ministry of the church through the application of professional nursing skills
- Respond to people's inner spiritual needs
- Advise members inside and outside the church on health issues
- Engage in the work of health education from a Christian perspective

Licensed Evangelist

Licensed Evangelists (also sometimes called Pioneer Ministers) are called to engage with their communities and develop relevant forms of church. The communities they engage might be geographical but could also be demographic or interest-based.

They work collegially with clergy and other Lay Ministers and may work alongside these colleagues within Ministry Area teams.

The work of the Pioneer Minister will depend on the gifts and skills of the individual and the characteristics and needs of the community they are called to serve. This may include:

- Being intentionally present in the community they are engaging with
- Seeking to build meaningful relationships with members of their community
- Finding opportunities to share faith in new ways within these communities
- Exploring relevant ways of being church

Pioneers have a desire to live out their faith in meaningful ways; to reach those who have no knowledge of God; and to enable those who would not otherwise engage in church to develop their spirituality. Because of this, Pioneer Ministry often begins in the community, rather than the existing church and may take many forms, depending on the community within which it emerges.

Evangelists are authorised to preach in public worship and preside at Services of the Word.

Licensed Youth Minister (or Children's Minister or Family Minister etc).

Youth Ministers have strategic responsibility for Youth and Children' work in a particular context. They may work with a particular emphasis on teenagers, families or children of specific ages. Key aspects of the role are:

- To develop a strategy for ministry amongst children and young people
- To encourage children and young people to come to faith in Jesus Christ
- To disciple and mentor children and young people in their Christian faith
- To take an active lead in youth and children's work and provide direction and encouragement for other volunteers and assistants
- To work collaboratively with other ministers to ensure that youth and children's work plays an integral part of the life and ministry of the church.

Youth Ministers are authorised to lead and preach in public worship for those to whom they minister.

Ordained Ministry

The Diocese ordains and licenses Deacons and Priests and these ministries may be expressed in stipendiary, non-stipendiary, deployable and local forms. Discernment and training for licensed ministries, lay and ordained, is held together and follows the same systems and principles.

The Church in Wales recognises one order of priestly ministry. All priests are priests equally. However a person might become a deployable minister, meaning that they are likely to move from post to post, area to area over time. Alternatively they might be called to serve one Mission Area community, that from which they emerge, where they live and/or worship. The latter are NSM(L)s. It is particularly important that the vocation of NSM(L)s is fully discerned and supported at the local level and that a clear and agreed account of the minister's expected role is developed at the local level, within the local church and Mission Area where it is anticipated that they will serve. This additional level of discernment replaces the Provincial level of discernment undergone by deployable ministers, but it is in no way a short-cut into ordained ministry. To the contrary, it is a significant requirement that places a serious demand for careful reflection upon the candidate, local church and mission area. NSML candidates will attend a regional discernment board, as will candidates for licensed lay ministries which are also usually expressed in the local context.

Discernment

See <http://stasaph.churchinwales.org.uk/life/steering-groups/developing/discernment-process-for-ministry/> for more details.

Those who wish to explore a vocation to a Licensed Ministry, or to Ordination as a Deacon or Priest (either Stipendiary, Non-Stipendiary, or Non-Stipendiary (Local)) should first speak to their local church priest. The priest should then, once they are satisfied that the individual has their support and the support of their local church to proceed, refer the individual, via the Ministry Support Officer, to a Vocations Advisor. The Vocations Advisor will assist the candidate to explore and articulate their sense of calling.

Practical experience of ministry, for example in shadowing existing ministers, is highly recommended. This can be in a local church, or a sector ministry (eg chaplaincy) context. Candidates are free to arrange this themselves, or can ask their Vocations advisor or the Diocesan Director of Vocation for help or recommendations.

Additionally, many prospective candidates have found beginning the Exploring Faith: Theology for Life programme helpful in exploring their vocation. It is not necessary to have begun or completed selection before starting the course.

Additional Contact:

Ministry Support Officer Jackie Feak - ministry.stasaph@churchinwales.org.uk
Diocesan Office
High Street
St Asaph
LL17 ORD
01745 582245

Once a candidate and their vocations advisor and the appropriate Diocesan Officers are happy that they are able to give a good account of their vocation and meet the selection criteria (see Appendix 5), attendance at a selection conference will be arranged. This process of reflection can take typically 1-2 years and sometimes longer, depending on the candidate.

All candidates may attend a Diocesan and/or Regional Discernment Board. These can recommend a particular ministry that they feel the candidate should begin to train for. Those recommended for a deployable ministry - that is either stipendiary or non-stipendiary ministry where it is reasonably anticipated that the person would move from area to area over the course of their service - will also be asked to attend a Provincial Discernment Board.

Training

Training is overseen by the St Padarn's Institute which includes the St Michael's College site in Llandaff but has staff in each Diocese.

It is most common for those preparing for ordained stipendiary ministry to be resident at St Michael's College, Llandaff for 2 - 3 years but more flexible, mixed mode training is being developed, where the candidate is resident in Llandaff Wednesday-Friday and returns home for the rest of the week, being based in a Mission Area locally.

It is most common for those training for other ministries to undertake 2 to 4 years of training within the Diocese, non-residentially. However, in all cases, each candidate will be treated as an individual and training will, as much as possible, be tailored to their particular circumstances and prior experience. It should also be stressed that their ministry is ongoing through training and it is not the case that all training must be completed before any form of ministry can begin. Candidates already have a ministry, develop it in formation and may be licensed and ordained at the right time for them and the Church, which may be while initial training is still ongoing.

Training has five elements:

- **Theological Study** on the Exploring Faith: Theology for Life programme. For ordained ministry, a Diploma (4 years part time/ 2 years full time study) is the minimum requirement. For Licensed Ministry a Certificate (2 years part time) is the minimum.
- **Practical Experience** in the Ministry Team of a Mission Area or sector ministry.
- **Spiritual Development** - with a Spiritual Director Ministry Specific Skills - One week and three weekend residentials on a 3 year programme.
- **Formational Reflection** - with a Formational Guide in a Formational Cell.

Different elements may be begun and ended at different times, so for example, a candidate might take 1 year of study while going through discernment, complete two years of all elements before ordination or licensing, and then complete the Ministry Skills and Exploring Faith Diploma programmes in the first year after licensing. Individual discernment of the best pattern of training for each candidate will be undertaken and candidates and parishes are expected to respect and support all our trainee ministers in their individual journeys.