Certified Lay Speaker (CLS)

Michigan Conference
The United Methodist Church

Overview of a Certified Lay Speaker

See *Book of Discipline of The UMC – 2020/2024* ¶267.

A certified lay speaker is a certified lay servant whose call has been affirmed by the Michigan conference committee on lay servant ministries to serve the church in pulpit supply in accordance and compliance with *The Book of Discipline of The UMC – 2020/2024* ¶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.

STEPS TO BECOME A CERTIFIED LAY SPEAKER (CLS)

1. Be currently certified as a lay servant.
2. Complete a track of study including one course from each of the following subject categories:
   a. The BASIC Course for Lay Servant Ministries. Whenever possible, the conference committee encourages this course to be taken in person (within district) to create community connection.
   b. Leading worship: *Leading Worship*, Taylor Burton-Edwards OR *Your Ministry of Leading Worship 101* (offered through beadisciple.com).
   c. Leading prayer: *Leading in Prayer*, Mary O. Benedict OR *Leading Public Prayer* (offered through beadisciple.com).
   d. Discovering Spiritual Gifts: *Discover Your Spiritual Gifts*, William J. Carter OR *For the Common Good*, Christine Harman OR *Rediscovering Our Spiritual Gifts* (offered through beadisciple.com).
   e. Preaching: *Called to Preach*, Dawn Chesser OR *From Your Heart to Theirs: Delivering an Effective Sermon*, Tony Franks and David Carroll. Whenever possible, the conference committee encourages this course to be taken in person (within district) to create community connection.
   f. United Methodist Heritage: *Living Our United Methodist Beliefs*, George Hovaness Donigian or *Living Our United Methodist Beliefs* (offered through beadisciple.com).
   g. United Methodist Polity: *Life Together in the United Methodist Connection*, Beth Galbreath or Life *Together in the United Methodist Connection* (offered through beadisciple.com).
   h. Other courses as may be determined by the Conference Committee on Lay Servant Ministries.
   NO MORE THAN 50% OF THESE CLASSES MAY BE TAKEN THROUGH beadisciple.com.
3. Complete the Certified Lay Speaker Application (form 2).
4. Include your current church conference annual report.
5. Include the text of a sermon along with audio/video of the delivery and include three sermon evaluations.
6. Obtain a letter of recommendation from the pastor
7. Obtain a letter of recommendation from the church council or church conference of the local church in which you hold membership.

8. Interview with and obtain recommendation from the district committee on lay servant ministries
9. Submit all the above to the conference committee on lay servant ministries, for approval and certification.

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

1. Submit annual reports and renewal request form (form 5) to the church conference or church council and to the district committee on lay servant ministries, giving evidence of satisfactory performance as a certified lay speaker.
2. Complete at least one lay servant ministries advanced course in the last three years.
3. Obtain letter of recommendation for renewal from the pastor.
4. Obtain letter of recommendation for renewal from the church council or church conference of the local church or other United Methodist ministry in which you hold membership.
5. In the last three years, have interviewed with and obtained recommendation for renewal as a certified lay speaker from the district committee on lay servant ministries, and the approval for renewal from the conference committee on lay servant ministries.

Questions should be directed to the Michigan Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries, Colleen Croxall at ccroxall@emich.edu.

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