



LAY MINISTRY IN THE DIOCESE OF YORK IS CHANGING



As part of Living Christ's Story we are breathing new life into Lay Ministry in the Diocese of York.

Our deepest wish is that the whole people of God in our Diocese may be engaged in the whole mission of God across the whole of life. That means that **everyone** has a part to play; ministry is about us all using our God given gifts both in the life of the church and in the places God has put us – home, work, and communities. We have done a great deal of research, and drawn on the wisdom of those in our Diocese both lay and clergy. To this end we are engaging in a **three-fold renewal process** which will offer formation and resourcing focused on growing **three** key types of Lay Ministries in the Diocese of York.

**INFORMAL
(LOCAL)
LAY
MINISTRY**

**AUTHORISED
LAY
MINISTER**

**LICENSED
LAY
MINISTER
(READER)**

Until, together, ordained and lay, we form and equip lay people to follow Jesus confidently in every sphere of life in ways that demonstrate the Gospel we will never set God's people free to evangelise the nation.

SETTING GOD'S PEOPLE FREE (GS2056)

“It is fantastic to see the deep listening and re-envisioning of the Lay Ministry review bearing fruit in these significant changes to the way we develop lay ministry in the Diocese of York. I pray that this will help empower all of us to live Christ’s story and for there to be a huge flourishing of lay ministry in our diocese.”

ARCHBISHOP
STEPHEN
COTTRELL



He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.



INFORMAL LAY MINISTRY

Informal (sometimes called Local or Recognised) Lay ministries happen in the local parish, benefice or worshipping community. Examples of recognised ministry include leading a home group, pastoral care, assisting with children and youth ministry or offering prayer and listening.

We would like to see this ministry resourced more widely as part of our vision to see all lay people empowered and equipped; not just those seeking authorisation or licensing.

Authorised Lay Ministers (ALMs) are lay people active in church life, who have a particular gifting, vocation or calling to lay ministry, i.e. those called to work collaboratively alongside their wider ministry teams with a focus on growing, nurturing and serving the wider parish community. This ministry is new to our Diocese, though has functioned in other dioceses for a number of years.

Authorised Lay Ministry will be resourced through a new formation programme, **The Deepening Discipleship Project**. This embodies our commitment to seeing lay ministry emerge from the soil of discipleship and locating ministry amongst the whole people of God who are called to join in the mission of God to the whole of life.

AUTHORISED LAY MINISTER

LICENSED LAY MINISTER (READER)

Licensed Lay Ministers (Reader) are lay people who represent the church in a public, representative or leadership role. Licensed Lay Ministers (Reader) are involved in three main areas of ministry; Teaching the Faith, Enabling Mission and Leading in Church and Society.

As a Diocese we are wholeheartedly committed to reinvigorating this important heritage ministry. From Autumn 2023 Reader formation will begin with **The Deepening Discipleship Project** alongside those being formed for Authorised Lay Ministry. A further formation year will follow before Licensing and LLM (Readers) will be expected to commit to further resourcing post-Licensing.

Until laity and clergy are convinced, based on their baptismal mutuality, that they are equal in worth and status, complementary in gifting and vocation, mutually accountable in discipleship, and equal partners in mission, we will never form Christian communities that can evangelise the nation.



He handed out gifts of apostle, prophet, evangelist, and pastor-teacher to train Christ's followers in skilled servant work, working within Christ's body, the church, until we're all moving rhythmically and easily with each other, efficient and graceful in response to God's Son, fully mature adults, fully developed within and without, fully alive like Christ.

Ephesians 4: 11-13 (The Message)

THE DEEPENING DISCIPLESHIP PROJECT



The Deepening Discipleship Project is a new accompanied learning community beginning in **September 2023** to support the growth and development of the ministry of God's people in local churches across our Diocese.

This learning community is for those who are interested in developing their ministry and would like to explore their calling to either:

- **Licensed Lay Minister (Reader)**
- **Authorised Lay Minister**

10 months
Space to explore your calling and gifts



Mentoring in Context



Online Local Formation Groups



Structured Practical Tasks



Four one-day gathered retreats

At the end of The Deepening Discipleship Project and on completion of your Safeguarding Training you will be eligible to be authorised in a Celebration of Lay Ministries Service.

Ongoing Learning and Support

After authorisation you will be welcome to join a number of **optional modules** (which will be open to anyone). If you wish to go on to Licensed Lay Ministry (Reader) then there will be 10 months of compulsory modules to complete before licensing.



THE DEEPENING DISCIPLESHIP PROJECT

Growing like Jesus where you are





FAQs

Why the changes?

Because we passionately believe that theologically it is the right thing to do. Ministry should be located amongst the whole people of God who are called to join in the mission of God to the whole of life. God calls us all, some of us into specific ministries which renew the church and enable God's people to join in God's mission. As a Diocese we are committed to a new, reinvigorated model for Lay Ministry which meets the needs of the Diocese as identified in the Deanery Action Plans.

How does this affect Readers?

Readers in the Diocese will now be known as Licensed Lay Minister (Reader). The ministry of Readers will continue but with a renewed focus on their role as teachers of the Faith, enablers of Mission and leaders in Church and Society. For those who feel called to support other lay ministers on their journey we would wholeheartedly welcome them to our community of Lay Ministry Encouragers (see below).

How does this affect RPAs?

All RPAs will be contacted in due course and offered a discernment process to establish if they would like to become an Authorised Lay Minister. This process will not be onerous and will be fully supported. As part of this process RPAs will need to update their Safeguarding training. RPAs who have recently completed the course will be offered opportunities to upskill in certain ministry sectors, honouring the commitment given at the beginning of their course. For further details see the document "How does it affect me? RPAs"

What resourcing will be available for different Ministry sectors (pastoral, youth work etc?)

There will be lots of resourcing for different ministry sectors. Our brilliant Diocesan teams will continue to offer development opportunities in a host of areas to support you. In 2023 the Start of Lay Ministries Adviser will also be organising events around the Diocese to support informal Lay Ministry, if you or your Church has a specific need then please get in touch with us. As part of our offer moving forward from Autumn 2023 there will be regular modules on different ministry sectors to meet the needs of our Diocese and these can be accessed by anybody whether or not they are licensed, authorised or on a formation pathway for these ministries.

How will all of these ministries be supported?

Naturally we want to nurture and support Lay Ministries in the Diocese as much as possible. Support will begin with your incumbent or ministry team but we are also creating a diverse community of Lay Ministry Encouragers to support you along the path of discernment, formation and lifelong learning. If you are interested in joining this community then get in touch.

"We long for a church where lay ministries are recognised, valued and celebrated as God-given and where all ministers, lay and ordained, are co-labourers in the Kingdom of God."

*from 'A Vision for Lay Ministries'
Published by the General Synod of the Church of England, 2020*



More details on all of the changes can be found in the booklet "*Lay Ministry: Opportunities for you in the Diocese of York*"