

## 402. CERTIFIED LAY MINISTERS

1. A certified lay minister is a professing member of a local congregation who has received special training in Wesleyan doctrine and our denominational polity, and endorsement by the church in order to serve the church as laity. This category encompasses all those who were previously named certified lay servants, certified lay speakers, certified lay ministers, deaconesses, home missionaries, and lay missionaries. Certified lay ministers may work in any area of the church's ministry, including leading, teaching, proclaiming/preaching, evangelizing, worship, and caring ministry. As laity, a certified lay minister is not subject to the approval or appointment of the bishop or presiding elder, although they may request the lay minister serve in a ministry capacity outside his or her own local church.

2. Qualifications. Persons desiring to be certified lay ministers must fulfill the following qualifications:

- a. Professing member of a local Global Methodist congregation (or its predecessor) for at least two years.
- b. Satisfactory completion of a course in lay ministry, approved by the Commission on Higher Education and Ministry, covering the church's doctrine, history, polity, and basic Bible knowledge.
- c. Satisfactory completion of at least one advanced course in lay ministry, approved by the Commission on Higher Education and Ministry, on an area of ministry (e.g., preaching, worship leading, caring ministry, etc.). Coursework or training in other settings may be counted to meet this requirement at the discretion of the board of ministry.
- d. National background check.
- e. Written recommendation by the pastor and endorsement by majority vote of the pastor-parish relations committee and the charge conference.
- f. Interview and approval by the annual conference board of ministry. A public service of commitment recognizing the certification is recommended.

3. Renewal of Certification. Certification for lay ministry may be renewed every three years by the annual conference board of ministry based on the following:

- a. An annual report to the charge conference and annual conference board of ministry outlining what ministry had been done during the year and giving evidence of satisfactory performance.
- b. Endorsement by majority vote of the charge conference annually.
- c. Written recommendation for renewal by the pastor.
- d. Completion of an additional national background check every three years
- e. Satisfactory completion of at least one additional advanced course in lay ministry, approved by the Commission on Higher Education and Ministry, in the last three years.

4. Conditions of service.

a. A certified lay minister serves as a volunteer, but an honorarium and expenses for pulpit supply or other specialized ministries outside one's own local church are appropriate. A certified lay minister serving as a lay staff member of a church or other ministry should be equitably compensated for their work.

b. Certification as a lay minister may be transferred to another annual conference if the person relocates. Subsequent renewal in that new annual conference is in accordance with ¶ 402.3.

c. Persons who held active certification in a predecessor denomination shall automatically be received as certified lay ministers in the Global Methodist Church, provided that they have met the requirements of ¶ 402.2b-c through coursework in the predecessor denomination, subscribe to the doctrinal standards and Social Witness of this Transitional Book of Doctrines and Discipline, and agree to abide by its discipline. Subsequent renewal is in accordance with ¶ 402.3. Those not meeting the requirements of ¶ 402.2b-c are not certified but may work toward certification and are not required to repeat coursework they have already completed.