

Catechist

Title III, Canon 4, Section 8

A Catechist is a lay person authorized to prepare persons for Baptism, Confirmation, Reception, and the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows, and shall function under the direction of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.

Every congregation needs to identify, call, and equip lay people with the gifts and vocation of a Catechist. In most cases, these people, working with and under the direction of a priest or deacon, may not need to be licensed. A licensed Catechist is a confirmed adult communicant in good standing called to lead in preparing people for Christian initiation or renewal of their life in Christ and membership in the Church, and to be a teacher of teachers. This may be particularly important in the absence of resident clergy. A person who accepts this call should have a love of teaching and learning, as well as the ability to teach people of all ages and abilities, including families, and be willing and able to share parts of their own faith story, as well as fostering a safe and respectful environment for others to share. A person so called should consider making this their primary ministry in terms of time and energy. But this ministry cannot be done alone. It requires intentional congregational support (coordinated, perhaps, by a member of the clergy or a member of the Vestry). The Bishop should be consulted prior to the introduction of the ministry or development of an applicant's training process for this license.

Discernment

Candidates considering the ministry of Catechist should confer with sponsoring clergy, spiritual directors, their Congregational Commission on Ministry, and other vocational guides to discuss honestly how to test a call.

Discernment Questions for those discerning a call to this ministry:

- What does the Baptismal Covenant mean to me?
- What is ministry and what are things that I do that are ministry?
- Am I willing to share parts of my faith journey, as appropriate, with others?
- Have I asked God whether God might be calling me to this ministry?
- Can I tell the story of why I feel called to this ministry?
- What gifts do I have that would that be an asset for this ministry? What particular gifts do I bring now, and what gifts do I hope to develop/grow?
- What would I tell someone if asked, "What is important to know about God?"
- How have I experienced God's grace in my life?
- Am I curious about Christian theology and the history of the Church?
- Would I enjoy finding out what others are seeking as they connect/reconnect with the church?

- Can I envision myself in the role of a teacher and be eager to foster a safe and respectful environment where others can learn and share?
- What do I hope to help people understand or experience through my service as a Catechist?

Expectations

A confirmed adult communicant in good standing, prior to licensing, should be able to:

1. Describe his or her sense of call to this ministry orally and in writing to the Congregational Commission on Ministry.
2. Demonstrate appropriate social skills for meeting and engaging people of all ages and abilities, including families.
3. Demonstrate basic pastoral skills such as reflective listening and respect for confidentiality.
4. Demonstrate competence in the following subjects:
 - a. The Holy Scriptures
 - b. The Book of Common Prayer and the Hymnal
 - c. Church History and Polity, including the Five Marks of Mission
 - d. The church's Doctrine as set forth in the Creeds and An Outline of the Faith, commonly called the Catechism.
 - e. Methods of Catechesis
5. Complete all required Diocesan Safe Church Trainings. These trainings are available both through in-person training events and online training programs. Visit norcalepiscopal.org/safechurch for more details.

License Renewal

Licenses may be renewed by the Bishop for an additional three-year period. The supervising Clergy Person must send a letter on church letterhead to the Office of the Bishop certifying that:

1. The licensee has faithfully practiced his/her licensed ministry

2. The licensee participated in appropriate continuing education.
 - a. This education may include informal classes with supervising clergy, approved workshops or seminars, or suggested reading.
 - b. Formation and enrichment to strengthen ministers, such as retreats, quiet days, spiritual development activities, prayer workshops etc. at the discretion of supervising clergy.

Training and Study Resources

Online Resources

- Anglican Communion Office. 2015. *Marks of Mission*. Anglican Communion Website. Accessed October 20, 2015. www.anglicancommunion.org/identity/marks-of-mission.aspx
- Armentrout, Donald S., and Robert Boak Slocum. 1999. *An Episcopal Dictionary of the Church: A User-friendly Reference for Episcopalians*. Church Publishing Inc. Accessed October 20, 2015. http://archive.episcopalchurch.org/109399_79309_ENG_HTM.htm Online version of this book on The Episcopal Church website.
- Associated Parishes for Liturgy and Mission. 2002. *The Catechumenate: Forming the Body of Christ in the 21st Century*. Accessed October 20, 2015. www.associatedparishes.org/images/Catechumenate.pdf
- BibleGateway. *A Searchable Online Bible in over 100 Versions and 50 Languages*. Accessed October 20, 2015. www.biblegateway.com
- Church Publishing. 2004. *The Book of Occasional Services-2003*. New York: Church Publishing, Inc. Accessed October 20, 2015. www.richardliantonio.com/anglican/Occasional_Services_2003.pdf. Online version of this book.
- The Episcopal Church. 1979. *Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church: Together with the Psalter Or Psalms of David According to the Use of the Episcopal Church*. Web author: Charles Wohlers. Accessed October 20, 2015. http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/formatted_1979.htm Online files with the sections of the BCP in RTF, MSWord and PDF formats.
- Hymnary.org. *Hymnal 1982: According to the Use of the Episcopal Church*. Church Publishing Inc. Accessed October 20, 2015. www.hymnary.org/hymnal/EH1982. Online version of the Episcopal Hymnal
- Kitch, Canon Anne E. *Adult Baptism in the Episcopal Church with Anne Kitch*. ChurchNext. Accessed October 20, 2015. www.churchnext.tv/school/catalog/course/adult-baptism-in-the-episcopal-church-with-anne-kitch/

- The Lectionary. 2015. *The Lectionary A collection of Lectionary resources for the Episcopal Church*. Accessed October 20, 2015. <http://satucket.com/lectionary/>
- North American Association of the Catechumenate. 2015. *Living Wet, A Sharing Site For Faith Formation, Nurturing Disciples, & Baptismal Living*. Accessed October 20, 2015. <http://livingwet.ning.com>
- North American Association of the Catechumenate. 2015. *North American Association of the Catechumenate Website*. Accessed October 20, 2015. www.catechumenate.org
- Puckett, Kelly W. 2015. *The Lectionary Page*. www.lectionarypage.net. Accessed October 20, 2015. Lectionary page and liturgical calendar.

Books for Individual or Group Study

- Anderson, Herbert., and Edward Foley. 2001. *Mighty Stories, Dangerous Rituals: Weaving Together the Human and the Divine*. Jossey-Bass.
- Armentrout, Donald S., and Robert Boak Slocum. 1999. *An Episcopal Dictionary of the Church: A User-friendly Reference for Episcopalians*. New York: Church Publishing Inc.
- *The Bible*—There are a number of translations that The Episcopal Church has authorized for use. Many congregations use the *New Revised Standard Version* (1990)
- Bushkofsky, Dennis., Suzanne Burke and Richard Rouse, editors. 2012. *Go Make Disciples, An Invitation to Baptismal Living; A Handbook to the Catechumenate*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress. (Companion CD with supplementary materials may be purchased separately)
- Church Publishing. 2004. *The Book of Occasional Services-2003*. New York: Church Publishing, Inc.
- The Episcopal Church. 1979. *Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church: Together with the Psalter Or Psalms of David According to the Use of the Episcopal Church*. New York: Church Publishing Inc.
- The Episcopal Church, 1985. *The Hymnal, 1982, Service music according to the use of the Episcopal Church*. New York: Church Hymnal Corp.
- Harris, Maria. 1989. *Fashion Me a People: Curriculum in the Church*. Westminster John Knox Press.
- Law, Eric. 1993. *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb*. Chalice Press.
- Peterson, Eugene H. 2003. *The Message: the Bible in contemporary language*. Colorado Springs: NavPress.
- Schori, Katherine Jefferts. 2012. *Gathering at God's Table: The Meaning of Mission in the Feast of Faith*. Skylight Paths Publishers.
- Taylor, Charles W. 1991. *The Skilled Pastor: Counseling as the Practice of Theology*. Fortress Press.

Note: The Catechist should comply with the general canons regarding licensed lay ministries found in Title III, Canon 4, Sections 1 and 2.

Constitution & Canons. Together with the Rules of Order for the Government of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, otherwise known as The Episcopal Church. Adopted and Revised in General Convention, 1789-2012., 2012, New York, New York, Church Publishing Incorporated.

CANON 4: Of Licensed Ministries

Sec. 1 (a) A confirmed communicant in good standing or, in extraordinary circumstances, subject to guidelines established by the Bishop, a communicant in good standing, may be licensed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to serve as Pastoral Leader, Worship Leader, Preacher, Eucharistic Minister, Eucharistic Visitor, Evangelist, or Catechist. Requirements and guidelines for the selection, training, continuing education, and deployment of such persons, and the duration of licenses shall be established by the Bishop in consultation with the Commission on Ministry.

(b) The Presiding Bishop or the Bishop Suffragan for the Armed Forces may authorize a member of the Armed Forces to exercise one or more of these ministries in the Armed Forces in accordance with the provisions of this Canon. Requirements and guidelines for the selection, training, continuing education, and deployment of such persons shall be established by the Bishop granting the license.

Sec. 2 (a) The Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith may request the Ecclesiastical Authority with jurisdiction to license persons within that congregation or other community of faith to exercise such ministries. The license shall be issued for a period of time to be determined under Canon III.4.1(a) and may be renewed.

MINISTRY CANON III.4.3-8

The license may be revoked by the Ecclesiastical Authority upon request of or upon notice to the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.

(b) In renewing the license, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall consider the performance of the ministry by the person licensed, continuing education in the licensed area, and the endorsement of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith in which the person is serving.

(c) A person licensed in any Diocese under the provisions of this Canon may serve in another congregation or other community of faith in the same or another Diocese only at the invitation of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight, and with the consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority in whose jurisdiction the service will occur.