

Procedures and Guidelines for Lay Eucharistic Ministers

(Revised: August 29, 2010)

General Information

1. This guide is intended to assist you in leading God's people in worship so that what we do enhances, rather than detracts from our worship. All we do should be done with reverence and high regard to the special calling of ministering at God's altar.
2. *Lay Eucharistic Ministers* are hereafter referred to as "**LEM**s." LEMs serve the chalice and/or intinction cup during communion, and on occasion, the bread. Under the canons of our church, a LEM must be a confirmed, active member of the Episcopal Church and at least 16 years of age. LEMs must be licensed by the diocese to serve in this capacity. For this purpose, special training sessions are held periodically; **all LEMs are expected to attend.**
3. This guide provides the details necessary for you to serve as a LEM. Please remember that attention to details diminishes confusion during worship, ensures less distraction to the worshiping congregation, and prevents the altar party from looking like the "Keystone Cops" up front. So please read the following guidelines attentively and ensure that you understand them.
4. LEMs will receive a schedule in advance, both electronically and a paper copy. Please mark the dates on your calendar. The schedule is also posted on the St. James' web site for easy reference.
5. LEMs should plan to vest, process, and sit in the sanctuary for the entire service. If there is some reason why you cannot do so, please discuss the matter with the rector ahead of time.
6. LEMs assist the worshiping congregation by leading the congregational responses during the liturgy; therefore, they should do so with "reverent gusto."
7. LEMs should be prepared to proclaim (read) either of the lectionary lessons for the day and lead the Psalm in case an assigned lector is not present. Refer to pages 325 and 357 in *The Book of Common Prayer* for alternative endings to the lessons and the "Lector Instructions" on pages 7-8 of this guide.
8. LEMs are responsible to make arrangements for their own substitutes should they be unavailable on a Sunday when they are scheduled.
 - a. Please notify the parish office and Jane Lorenz of any changes (301-926-0689 or lorenzjane@aol.com).
 - b. In seeking a substitute, do not confuse licensed LEMs with lectors. *Lectors* are those persons who read the scripture lessons during worship services. LEMs should secure another licensed LEM as a substitute, and lectors should secure a trained lector from the lector list.
9. If you have any questions about being a Lay Eucharistic Minister or about lectoring, call our 8 am service coordinator, Bob Quackenbush at 301-299-3793 (home) or contact Martha Lawrenz, coordinator for the 9:15 am and 11:00 services (H: 301-493-8402 or email: lawrenzmartha@gmail.com). Still confused? Then call Cindy Baskin in the church office (301-762-8040).

General Instructions for All LEMs

1. LEMs should arrive at least **15 minutes** before a regular Sunday service or **30 minutes** before a festival service and/or a service with an unusual liturgy (e.g., Maundy Thursday). LEMs should:
 - a. Vest;
 - b. Check “Serving Our Worship” (located in a notebook in the narthex on the table, posted on a bulletin board in the office, and also posted on the door to the sacristy) to familiarize yourself with others with whom you will be serving;
 - c. **Gather in the Rector’s office 10 minutes before the service** for prayer and any special instructions for the service.

2. **Hygienic Practices**
 - a. Immediately before the service or just after you have vested, thoroughly wash your hands for the recommended 15 seconds using the antibacterial soap that is stocked in the vesting/flower room restroom.
 - b. Towards the conclusion of the Passing of the Peace (and after you have finished passing the peace with anyone), LEMs should use the hand sanitizer that is located on the credence table. Use a coin size portion in the palm of your hand and massage your hands until they are dry.
 - i. Bread LEMs and clergy sanitize their hands after the ablutions (washing with water);
 - ii. If you are administering the bread, strive to touch only the bread and not the hands of those to whom you are distributing.

3. **Distributing the Wine**
 - a. The cup is distributed to communicants with one of two phrases:
 - i. *The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you in everlasting life.* (BCP, p 338)
 - or**
 - ii. *The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation.* (BCP, p 338)
 - iii. At the 8 am service, a 3rd phrase may be used: *The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ’s Blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.* (BCP, p 338) [**Note:** if you decide to use this longer phrase, space it out over, using one sentence per communicant].
 - b. After serving the common chalice, wipe the rim of the cup – both inside and out – with the purificator and rotate the cup a few degrees before serving the next person.
 - c. The Altar Guild will have placed a small plate and spoon on the credence table beside the altar table.
 - i. The spoon may be used to remove bread crumbs or other foreign objects from the chalice.
 - ii. Should a consecrated wafer fall to the floor, put it on this plate; you do not have to eat it.
 - d. **Note: Though there are many communicants who choose not to receive the wine, be careful not to accidentally miss serving someone who does wish to receive – it has happened!**
 - e. After all communicants have been served, LEMs return the cup to the small

credence table behind the altar and place the purificator over the top of the chalice.

- f. Those serving the bread should return any remaining wafers to the large chalice ciborium and then place the empty paten on top of the purificator of a wine chalice.
4. **Important Note:** After the service concludes, LEMs should return to the altar to assist the altar guild in removing the Eucharistic vessels to the sacristy. Then remove and hang up vestments.

Procedures Specific to the 8:00 AM Service

1. One LEM is assigned to each 8:00 am service; a separate schedule and roster is sent out periodically by Bob Quackenbush to 8 am LEMs.
2. **Procession:**
 - a. The LEM leads the clergy down the center aisle of the chapel.
 - b. When you reach the front of the chapel, reverence the altar with a slight bow and then proceed to the side chapel pew (near the office door).
3. **During the Service:**
 - a. The LEM usually reads the lessons and leads the psalm assigned for the day from the lectern.
 - b. Occasionally, a separate lector may be assigned for one of the readings – please check your schedule carefully.
4. **Distribution of Communion:**
 - a. Don't forget to clean your hands with the hand sanitizer, located on the credence table, toward the conclusion of the Passing of the Peace.
 - b. During the Prayer of Consecration, the 8 am LEM stands to the side of the altar nearest the office door. **DO NOT** go around the chapel altar to the north side.
 - c. The Celebrant will serve the bread to the LEM and then serve the organist who will be standing on the north side of the altar.
 - d. The Celebrant will then hand the paten to the LEM in order to receive the bread from the LEM.
 - e. Next, the Celebrant serves the wine to the LEM and then receives the wine from the LEM.
 - f. The LEM then follows the Celebrant, crossing behind the chapel altar, to the main altar rail of the church at which the communion elements are distributed.
 - g. The LEM serves the chalice during communion, immediately following the celebrant who distributes the bread; the chalice is used both as a common cup and as an intinction cup.
5. **The Recessional:**
 - a. At a nod from the Celebrant (usually at the final verse of the recessional hymn) the LEM leaves the front of the chapel and recesses down the center chapel aisle.
 - b. Do **not** reverence the altar upon exiting.
6. **Special Notes:**
 - a. Do **not** assume that the 8:00 am service will always be the same. Normal patterns may change, particularly on feasts Days. Always check with the celebrant prior to

- the beginning of the service for any special instructions.
- b. 8:00 LEMs may be called upon to serve as the Crucifer and acolyte. Be prepared!!

Procedures Specific to the 9:15 AM and 11:00 AM Services

1. **Scheduling of LEMs for the 9:15 and 11:00 Services**
 - a. All 9:15 and 11:00 LEMs are organized into five teams
 - i. Team 1 serves on the first Sunday of each month, team 2 on the 2nd, etc.
 - ii. Team 5 LEMs serve on the fifth Sundays of the month and also are available as substitutes for other teams.
 - b. When it comes to scheduling for Christmas and Holy Week Easter services, we will use a sign-up procedure as in past years that is open to all licensed LEMs.
2. **Before the service:**
 - a. Make sure your hands are thoroughly washed (using hygienic methods as outlined above) and your fingernails trimmed and clean.
3. **Procession:** LEMs not serving as acolytes follow the Gospel bearer (if there is one); otherwise, they follow the choir during the procession.
 - a. LEMs process in pairs, if possible.
 - b. Each LEM processes down the same side of the aisle and sits on the same side of the chancel as the side at which he/she will begin distributing communion.
 - c. There should be a **two-pew spacing** between the LEMs and those immediately before them in the procession.
 - d. When you reach the transept, reverence the altar with a slight bow; then proceed around the crucifer up into the sanctuary and follow around on the inside of the altar rail to the right or left (depending on which side you are on) to your chair.
 - e. If you are a member of the choir as well as serving as a LEM . . .
 - i. Process with the choir;
 - ii. Move from your choir seat to your place behind the altar during the singing of the Presentation Song after the Offertory anthem/hymn.
4. **Distribution of Communion to the Altar Party – 9:15 and 11:00 am**
 - a. Don't forget to clean your hands with the hand sanitizer, located on the credence table, toward the conclusion of the Passing of the Peace.
 - b. After the invitation to communion is given by the Celebrant, all LEMs and acolytes should form a circle behind the celebrant.
 - c. The Celebrant serves the bread first to an assisting priest/B-LEM. Then the Celebrant hands the paten to the assisting priest/B-LEM from whom he/she will receive the bread.
 - d. The Celebrant then serves the assisting priest/B-LEM the wine and then receives the wine from the 2nd priest/B-LEM.
 - e. After the Celebrant and 2nd priest/B-LEM have received the elements, the Celebrant serves the bread to the remainder of the altar party and the assisting priest serves the wine to the rest of the altar party.

5. **Distribution of Communion to the Congregation at the 11:00 AM Service**
 - a. Distribution at the 11:00 service uses two teams of three people each: 1 priest who distributes the bread, followed by 1 LEM with the common cup, followed by 1 LEM with an intinction cup.
 - b. After receiving communion, each member of the altar party picks up either the paten, chalice, or intinction cup (whatever he/she is assigned to distribute) and proceeds to his/her respective place to begin the distribution.
 - i. The Celebrant plus LEMs in slots 3 & 4 on the schedule begin on the chapel side at the back wall.
 - ii. Preacher plus LEMs in slots 1 & 2 on the schedule begin at the front center of the altar rail on the choir side
 - c. The elements are distributed in a **full circle** around the altar rail once distribution has begun.
 - d. A youth acolyte may be available behind the altar to refill the chalices as needed. If not, LEMs should refill chalices as needed; be careful not to overfill the chalice.
 - e. If you know the communion hymns, it is permissible to sing softly while waiting to serve, but please do not sing while distributing the elements at the rail.

6. **Distribution of Communion to the Congregation at the 9: 15 am Service (three teams of two)**
 - a. At the 9:15 am service and at other special services (e.g., the Children’s Christmas Pageant and the Easter Family Service), we use three teams of two persons each to distribute communion.
 - b. In this case, one person serves bread and one person serves the chalice – the chalice is used both as a common cup and for intinction.
 - c. Each team will be assigned two sections of the altar rail to serve:
 - i. The same team serves the same section throughout the distribution;
 - ii. Do not rotate around the altar rail as at the 11:00 am Sunday service.
 - d. Team Assignments:
 - i. The Preacher (priest) + LEM in slot 1 on schedule serve the **choir/pulpit** side;
 - ii. The Celebrant + LEM in slot 2 on schedule serve the 2 **center** sections;
 - iii. The Officiant + LEM in slot 3 on schedule serve the **chapel/lectern** side.

7. **The BREAD LEM**
 - a. If one of the priests is absent, one LEM is assigned to distribute the bread. This LEM is referred to as the “**B-LEM**”. The B-LEM should move up to join the Celebrant in the hand washing when the acolyte brings up the lavabo bowl, uses the hand sanitizer, and then stands to the immediate left of the Celebrant at the corner of the altar before the Prayer of Consecration.
 - b. The bread is served to the communicants with one of these phrases:
 - i. *The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you in everlasting life [Amen]* (BCP, p 365).
 - or**
 - ii. *The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven [Amen]* (BCP, p 365).
 - c. **Concerning the Blessing of Children and Others**
 - i. In the Episcopal Church three actions are reserved specifically to the ordained priesthood: absolving, blessing, and consecrating – all other actions and ministries in the church may be performed by laity.

- ii. Therefore, should the B-LEM comes to someone at the altar rail who wishes to receive a blessing (generally signaled by having his/her arms folded), the B-LEM should inquire discreetly whether a blessing is requested and then, if so, ask him/ her to remain kneeling until the priest returns to that spot.

8.

The Recessional

- a. The order for the recessional during the closing hymn is in the same order as the processional. The crucifer and torch bearers lead, followed by the choir, and then the LEMS.
- b. LEMs should time their exit to immediately follow the choir, again at a spacing of two pews.
- c. When the choir is absent, LEMs should wait for a signal from the rector as to when to recess.
- d. LEMS should leave the back of the sanctuary by walking **behind** the pulpit or lectern to the altar rail and then following the **inside** of the rail. Do not take shortcuts through the sanctuary or walk on the outside of the rail.
- e. Do **not** reverence the altar upon exiting.
- f. At the conclusion of the recessional hymn, all LEMs should return to the altar area to assist the Altar Guild with removing the communion vessels to the sacristy for cleaning.

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General Procedures for Lectors

1. **General Information**

- a. All lectors receive a schedule; please note the dates you are scheduled to read and mark on a calendar. You will receive a copy of the readings the week before you are scheduled to read. The reminder will identify the particular reading and the introductory comments to include.
- b. Should you be unavailable for your assigned Sunday, please make arrangements with another lector (not a LEM) to substitute for you. If you have difficulty finding a substitute, then call Martha Lawrenz, our 9:15/11:00 Lector/LEM service coordinator or Bob Quackenbush, our 8:00 Lector/LEM service Coordinator.

2. **The week before . . .**

- a. Practice, practice, practice!
 - i. Remember, you are **proclaiming** God's Word, not just reading written text.
 - ii. You should read the text out loud as you practice.
 - iii. Insure that you know how to pronounce all words – if in doubt, ask.

3. **On the Sunday you read . . .**

- a. Check the lectionary book on the lectern prior to the service.
 - i. Insure that it is open to the right reading and that you know where to begin reading – do not assume this has been done for you.
 - ii. Familiarize yourself with the introductory sentences posted on the lectern.
 - iii. For the 9:15 am service **check the bulletin** to see if the reading has been reduced in length from the lectionary book.
 - iv. **Check the bulletin** to see which concluding phrase is listed:
 1. The most commonly used ending is “The Word of the Lord,” which has a congregational response: “Thanks be to God.”
 2. However, depending on the reading, sometimes “Here ends the lesson” is more appropriate and will be used.
- b. If you are assigned to read the 1st lesson, always check to see how the psalm will be led – check the bulletin or ask the rector or Director of Music.
 - i. At 8:00 am, the psalm is usually led by the lector immediately after the first lesson;
 - ii. At 9:15 am the psalm will usually be omitted, sung, or replace the first reading;
 - iii. At 11:00 am, the psalm may be sung by the choir and congregation or led by the lector of the 1st lesson
 - iv. At special festival services, a different lector than the reader of the 1st lesson may be assigned to lead the psalm; therefore, check your schedule carefully.
 - v. **Always check ahead of time!**

4. **During the Proclamation**

- a. Those reading the lessons should sit near the front on the lectern side or, better yet, in the south transept before the service begins. As soon as is appropriate, move to the lectern quickly, but with decorum.
- b. Adjust the microphone, if necessary, before you begin reading so that it is 6-8 inches directly in front of your mouth.
- c. Introduce the reading, using the **introductory comments** posted on the lectern.
 - i. If there are no introductory comments posted, then simply begin by saying:
“A reading from _____ (*insert the name of the book of the Bible*)
- d. Read the lesson, slowly and loudly.
- e. Pause slightly between the last verse of the reading and the concluding statement:
- f. **Do not move from the lectern** until both you and the congregation have concluded the final responses.

5. **Leading the Psalm**

- a. As noted above, always check before the service to ascertain how the Psalm is being led
- b. If you are to lead it, then . . .
 - i. Decide how you want it to be done (see pages 582-583 in the BCP for instructions):
 1. Read in unison by the entire congregation
 2. Antiphonally
 3. Responsively
 - ii. If you're going to lead it either antiphonally or responsively, decide whether you want to break the Psalm at the asterisk or at the verse:
 1. Read the psalm ahead of time to determine this
 2. Because of the nature of Hebrew poetry, some psalms break more naturally at the asterisk; others at the verse
- c. Introduce the Psalm, **clearly identifying how it will be said..**