

Lay Eucharistic Ministry Manual



Lay Eucharistic Minister Manual Introduction

In the early years of the church, the laity regularly ministered to members of the Christian family by taking them the Eucharist. In the year 200 A.D., Hippolytus, a bishop in Rome, wrote: *If there is no presbyter to give out what is to be distributed, the deacon shall pronounce the thanksgiving and shall supervise those who carry it away, to make sure they attend to their duty and distribute the blessed food; the distributors must give it to the widows and the sick.*¹

Administering Communion on Sunday mornings or taking the Sacrament to those who are sick or homebound is a sacred duty. The Lay Eucharistic Minister (LEM) assists in the central act of the Christian liturgy, feeding the faithful with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, this ministry is not to be taken lightly but is to be understood as a sacred trust. In order to be faithful in this work we must be prepared in heart and mind through prayer and training so that our efforts honor God and God's sacrificial love.

This booklet is intended to give all those who are called to this ministry a simple but complete understanding of their duties.

¹ A Manual For Eucharistic Ministers, Beth Wickenberg Ely, Morehouse Publishing, 1991, p. 1.

Training

- All LEMs must be trained before they can serve.
- Periodically there will be supplemental trainings. Even seasoned LEMs are expected to attend these trainings.
- All LEMs will be licensed by the Diocese of Virginia for this ministry. A LEM license is good for three years but must be renewed after that time. All licenses are kept in the Director of Servant Ministries' office (Nancy's office). If you are unsure when your license expires please feel free to contact Nancy in the parish office (nwarman@doers.org or 355-1779 ext. 333).

Scheduling

- LEM schedules will be sent out three times each year.
- All LEMs are expected to serve at the 7:45, 9:00 and 11:15 morning services (8:00 and 10:00 in the summer), as well as special services, on a rotating basis.
- All LEMs are expected to take Communion into people's homes when scheduled.
- If you are unable to serve when scheduled, you are expected to find your own replacement from the list of available LEMs.
- If you cannot serve on a Sunday when you are scheduled, please contact both the Parish Administrator, Anita Lisk (alisk@doers.org or 355-1779, ext. 313) AND the Lay Leader of the LEM ministry, Michael Lantz, (mwwlantz@gmail.com or 938-5223) to let them know who will be replacing you no later than 9:00 a.m. the preceding Thursday morning.

Sunday Mornings

- General instructions
- LEMs should arrive at least 30 minutes before the start of the service.
- Every LEM should be dressed appropriately out of respect for the work of God they are about to undertake.
- The LEM/Acolyte Vesting Room is off the Assembly Room in the basement of Gibson Hall. For every service, unless otherwise instructed, LEMs wear alb and cincture (white robe with rope).
- The proper length for an alb is one inch above the top of one's shoes.
- Also in the LEM robing room on the back of the door are the prayers and readings for each service.
- If you are scheduled to read the Prayers, Lesson or Psalm, please practice your reading several times before the service.
- LEMs are worship leaders, so it is important that delivery is slow, clear and expressive of meaning.
- After the service, please be sure to hang up your alb. If you find that albs are dirty or in need of repair please let Anita know. It would also be appreciated if you are willing to take the alb home to wash &/or repair it, if needed, as long as it can be returned by the following Sunday.
- As a rule, during the service when you approach or cross in front of the altar, show reverence with a bow. If you are holding a liturgical vessel such as a chalice, a bow is not needed.

7:45 A.M. SERVICE
(8:00 A.M. IN THE SUMMER)

- This service is always Holy Eucharist Rite I
- The LEM is to arrive by approximately 7:20.
- Vest in the LEM/Acolyte vesting room and retrieve your prayers or readings for the day.
- Wash your hands and meet the clergy in the hallway by the west sanctuary doors.
- Check in with the clergy to see if there any changes to the service or extra duties for that particular Sunday.
- Check over your readings carefully and ask the clergy if you have any questions about pronunciation.
- Light the candles and make sure everything looks right in the sanctuary.

Liturgy of the Word

- The LEM and the clergy process in from the west side door of the church.
- At the top of the stairs, the LEM and the clergy bow together facing the cross.
- The LEM sits in the prayer desk closest to the lectern unless otherwise instructed.
- The LEM will read the First Lesson from the lectern.
- Please read slowly and clearly with a strong voice. As a general rule, you ought to read so slowly that it feels a bit awkward.
- Pause after the reading for a three count before ending with – *The Word of the Lord*.
- The LEM will then lead the congregation in the Psalm.

- Sometime during the first half of the service, the LEM should estimate the attendance count of the congregation in order to assist the clergy in setting the altar.
- Following the Sermon and the Creed the LEM will lead the Prayers of the People from the lectern.
- Please read the prayers slowly and reverently. Be comfortable with the pronunciation of all the names.
 - Ask the clergy before the service begins if you have a concern about pronunciation.
- Be comfortable with the prayer form being used that day so that you can effectively express the various transitions and changes in content.
- Remain at the lectern through the Confession.

The Eucharist

- After passing the Peace and the announcements, the LEM and the clergy move to the altar.
- The LEM picks up the collection plates and hands them to the usher.
- The LEM then helps the clergy set the table.
 - Help the clergy estimate the number in attendance.
 - If needed, hand the clergy the bread, the wine and the water.
- After the table is set, the LEM goes down the steps and retrieves the collection plates from the usher. Present the plates at the altar and then set them back on the credence table.
- During the celebration of the Eucharist the LEM stands on either side of the clergy, turned slightly towards the center with hands clasped at waist level.

- After receiving Communion, the LEM will administer the chalice.
- Please memorize the words of administration found in the middle of page 338 in the BCP, (The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee . . .)
- After each person drinks from the chalice, please wipe the cup inside and out and turn it slightly.
- If you are in doubt as to whether someone wants to receive the chalice do not hesitate to quietly ask – *Will you receive?* Also feel free to ask parents regarding their children – *Will they receive?*
- Arms crossed over the chest of a communicant means that they do not want to receive.
- If someone wants to intinct (dip their wafer), please lower the chalice so that they can see inside the cup. This helps to avoid fingers in the wine.
- Occasionally someone will leave the wafer in their outstretched hands. This means that they want you to intinct for them and place the wafer into their mouths. (This is rare in Virginia.)
- Refill your chalice as necessary, never more than $\frac{3}{4}$ full.
- Never fill the chalice over the uncovered altar hangings. Always pour over the corporal.
- Avoid getting wine on the embroidered cross on the purificator. It is very difficult to clean.
- If you discover a large piece of wafer(s) floating in the chalice, you should use the small spoon located on the credence table to remove it. If there is no spoon, consult with the clergy regarding the best way to remove the piece.
- After Communion, help the clergy to do ablutions (clean up).

- Before the final prayer, please return to your prayer desk.
- The LEM and the clergy will recess together after the blessing. The LEM is first for the recession down the center aisle to the narthex.

9:00 A.M. SERVICE

Liturgy of the Word

- At the end of the procession the LEMs bow together in front of the altar, right before the top step at the altar rail.
- The LEMs sit in the chairs on either side of the altar. (See attached illustration.)
- During the Gospel hymn the clergy will give the torchbearers the signal to begin the Gospel procession.
 - The LEM follows behind the two torchbearers.
 - The priest serving as Deacon follows the LEM holding the Gospel book.
 - When the procession stops, the LEM walks between the torchbearers, passing one step in front of them.
 - The LEM then turns facing the altar and receives the Gospel book.
 - The LEM opens the Gospel book to the marked page and hold the book at chest level for the Deacon to read the Gospel.
 - When the Gospel reading is over, the book is closed and handed back to the Deacon. The LEM follows the torchbearers back to the chancel steps and goes to Children's Chapel. On occasion, the Deacon may give the LEM the Gospel book to carry. Place the Gospel book on the altar in front of the left [Gospel side] candle.
- Following the Sermon and the Creed the LEM will lead the Prayers of the People from the lectern.
 - Turn and reverence the altar on your way to the lectern if you are coming from inside the altar rail or if you are crossing the chancel from the pulpit side.

- Please read the prayers slowly and reverently. If the prayers call for “silence” please leave significant time for silent prayer 10 seconds for each petition.
- Be comfortable with the prayer form being used that day so you can effectively express the various transitions and changes in content.
- Remain at the lectern through the Confession.
- Return to your seat during the passing of the Peace.

Eucharist

- During the celebration of the Eucharist, the LEMs stand at the altar with the clergy.
- The Celebrant stands in the center flanked by the other clergy and then the LEMs.
- Please stand with your body turned slightly towards the center with hands clasped at waist level.
- After receiving Communion, the LEM will administer the chalice.
- Please memorize the words of administration found in the middle of page 365 in the BCP, (The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation) for Rite II.
- Communion is administered from the center of the altar rail working outwards.
- If you are the LEM assigned to administer the chalice in the chapel:
 - After receiving Communion follow the priest to the chapel.
 - Take with you a flagon (pitcher) of wine and breadbox or ciborium or wafers, if those elements are not already in the chapel.
 - Your chalice for use in the chapel will already be there along with a purificator.
- After each person drinks from the chalice, please wipe the cup inside and out and turn it slightly.
- If you are in doubt as to whether someone wants to receive the chalice, do not hesitate to quietly ask – *Will*

you receive? Also feel free to ask parents regarding their children – *Will they receive?*

- Arms crossed over the chest of a communicant means they don't want to receive.
- If someone wants to intinct (dip their wafer), please lower the chalice so that they can see inside the cup. This helps to avoid fingers in the wine.
- Occasionally someone will leave the wafer in his or her outstretched hands. This means they want you to intinct for them and place the wafer into their mouths. (This is rare in Virginia.)
- Refill your chalice as necessary, never more than $\frac{3}{4}$ full.
- Never fill the chalice over the uncovered altar hangings. Always pour over the corporal.
- If your purificator becomes too soiled, there are plenty of extras. They can be found on the credence table or in the burse on the altar. Never hesitate to get a new one when necessary.
- Avoid getting wine on the embroidered cross on the purificator, as it is very difficult to clean.
- If you discover a large piece of wafer(s) floating in the chalice, you should use the small spoon located on the credence table to remove it. If there is no spoon, consult with the clergy regarding the best way to remove the piece.
- After Communion, help the clergy to do ablutions (clean up) if asked.
- Before the final prayer, please return to your chair.
- The LEMs will recess together after the blessing.

11:15 A.M. SERVICE

- This service is either Holy Eucharist Rite I or Rite II whenever LEMs are required.
- Arrive by 10:45
- Wash your hands.
- Vest in the LEM vesting room and retrieve your prayers or readings for the day.
- If you are the only LEM for this service then you will process the Gospel and lead the prayers.
 - Please review the prayers to make sure you are comfortable with the form being used.
 - Make sure the Gospel book is properly marked (check with the clergy).
- If there are two or more LEMs for the service:
 - LEM 1 processes the Gospel.
 - LEM 2 leads the Prayers of the People.
 - All the LEMs will administer the chalice.
- Check with the clergy to see if there are any changes to the service or additional duties.
- Help to make sure that the acolytes are properly vested and ready to go.
- Meet the clergy in the narthex to line up for the procession.
- The LEMs process directly in front of the clergy and behind the choir.

Liturgy of the Word

- At the end of the procession the LEMs bow together in front of the altar, right before the top step at the altar rail.
- The LEMs sit in the chairs on either side of the altar. (See illustration.)
- During the Gospel hymn the clergy will give the torchbearers the signal to begin the Gospel procession.
 - The LEM follows behind the two torchbearers.
 - The priest serving as Deacon follows the LEM holding the Gospel book.

- When the procession stops the LEM walks between the torchbearers, passing one step in front of them.
- The LEM then turns facing the altar and receives the Gospel book.
- The LEM opens the Gospel book to the marked page and hold the book at chest level for the Deacon to read the Gospel.
- When the Gospel reading is over, the book is closed and handed back to the Deacon. The LEM follows the torchbearers back to the chancel steps and goes to Children’s Chapel. On occasion, the Deacon may give the LEM the Gospel book to carry. Place the Gospel book on the altar in front of the left [Gospel side] candle.
- Following the Sermon and the Creed the LEM will lead the Prayers of the People from the lectern.
- Turn and reverence the altar on your way to the lectern.
- Please read the prayers slowly and reverently. If the prayers call for “silence” please leave significant time for silent prayer 10 seconds for each petition.
- Be comfortable with the prayer form being used that day so you can effectively express the various transitions and changes in content.
- Remain at the lectern through the Confession.
- Return to your seat during the passing of the Peace.

Eucharist

- During the celebration of the Eucharist, the LEMs stand at the altar with the clergy.
- The Celebrant stands in the center flanked by the other clergy and then the LEMs.
- Please stand with your body turned slightly towards the center with hands clasped at waist level.
- After receiving Communion, the LEM will administer the chalice.
- Please memorize the words of administration found in the middle of page 365 in the BCP, (The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation) for Rite II

- Please memorize the words of administration found in the middle of page 338 in the BCP, (The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee . . .) for Rite I.
- Communion is administered from the center of the altar rail working outwards.
- If you are the LEM assigned to administer the chalice in the chapel:
 - After receiving Communion, follow the priest to the chapel.
 - Take with you a flagon (pitcher) of wine and breadbox or ciborium of wafers, if those elements are not already present in the chapel.
 - Your chalice for use in the chapel will already be there along with a purificator.
- After each person drinks from the chalice, please wipe the cup inside and out and turn it slightly.
- If you are in doubt as to whether someone wants to receive the chalice, do not hesitate to quietly ask – *Will you receive?* Also feel free to ask parents regarding their children – *Will they receive?*
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- Occasionally someone will leave the wafer in his or her outstretched hands. This means they want you to intinct for them and place the wafer into their mouths. (This is fairly rare in Virginia.)
- Refill your chalice as necessary, never more than $\frac{3}{4}$ full.
- Never fill the chalice over the uncovered altar hangings. Always pour over the corporal.
- If your purificator becomes too soiled, there are plenty of extras. They can be found on the credence table or in the burse on the altar. Never hesitate to get a new one when necessary.
- Avoid getting wine on the embroidered cross on the purificator, as it is very difficult to clean.

- If you discover a large piece of wafer(s) floating in the chalice, you should use the small spoon located on the credence table to remove it. If there is no spoon, consult with the clergy regarding the best way to remove the piece.
- After Communion, help the clergy to do ablutions (clean up) if asked.
- Before the final prayer, please return to your chair.
- The LEMs will recess together after the blessing.

**WHEN FIVE STATIONS ARE USED
FOR THE EUCHARIST**

- Three stations (with a priest administering the bread and the LEM serving the chalice at each) are usually used to serve the Eucharist – two at the main altar and one in the chapel.
- For services where a large attendance is expected, two more stations may be added – one at the top of the stairs on each side of the balcony.
- The LEM accompanies the priest assigned to a balcony station, carrying the chalice and purificator.

10:00 A.M. SUMMER SERVICE

- Check with the clergy to see if you should follow the 9:00 or the 11:15 a.m. service instructions.

IN-HOME LEMS

- Remember that when you take Communion to someone in his or her home you represent the Church.
- You bring with you not only the sacrament but your attitude should reflect the joy and love of God.
- You have a sacred task. Never forget that you literally bring God into these people's lives when they are in great need.
- Always pray before your visit. Pray that God will show you how to minister to this person in need.
- The time and attention you give to the person you are visiting is as important as the sacrament you are carrying.
- Report immediately to the church any needs or concerns the person may have.
- Feel free to call the clergy at home if it is after hours and you think it is necessary.
- Please find a substitute and notify Anita if you are sick and cannot visit your assigned person.

Before You Go

- The master schedule will let you know when you are scheduled to visit someone in their home.
- A week before you go, you will receive from the Church a notice telling you whom you are visiting, their address and telephone number.
- Sometime before Friday please call the person to confirm when you are coming.
- If the person is very old or very ill, you may need to call again on Sunday just to make sure.
- For many people who are ill or infirm, life can change dramatically from day to day. Someone who sounded happy to receive you on Wednesday may not feel the same way on Sunday. This is not a reflection on you or your ministry. It is simply a reflection of the difficulty of their lives. Try not to get too frustrated.

- If they are not interested in receiving Communion that day, you may hold onto the kit for a few days if you can reschedule.
- If you cannot reschedule, please call Anita at the office to request a different person to visit.

Sunday Morning

- Sit near the front of the church.
- Pay close attention to the service because you will carry the service with you, along with the Sacrament, into the person's home you are visiting.
- You can pick up your Communion Kit in the sacristy following the service.
- After the service take with you a copy of the service bulletin, as well as the *Sunday Chimes*.
- Also, take with you *The Distribution of Holy Communion* booklet (extras are located in a box in the narthex in the ushers' closet located on the East side of the church).
- Two booklets are available – Rite I and Rite II.
- You may use either booklet but be mindful of the generation of the person you are visiting. If they are older they might appreciate the Rite I service more than the Rite II.
- Bring an extra booklet for the person you are visiting.

For Your Visit

- Sit and visit for some time before you begin to offer Communion.
- Ask them how they are doing. Reflect back to them what you hear them saying.
- Be sure to listen carefully and read between the lines.
- Ask if there is another family member who might like to take part in the service.
- Set up Communion on an appropriate flat surface that is close to the person you are visiting. If they are in bed, set up a table beside them.
- See attached sheet illustrating setup.

- Be sure to read the Collect of the Day from the Sunday bulletin.
- Usually you should read the Gospel. You may read a different lesson or a second lesson, especially if it was the sermon's subject.
- Try to share something from the sermon you heard.
- Have prayers – use the ones included and feel free to add your own.
- Say the confession together.
- Share in Communion.
- Please allow some silence to work its way into the service. This liturgy is very short so take your time so that it will feel like worship.
- Please consume all leftover elements after the final prayer. If you are uncomfortable consuming the elements then they should be poured onto the bare earth in a discreet place.
- Never pour the wine down the sink or put anything into the toilet!!
- Wipe the chalice and paten with the purificator and repack the communion kit.
- Please fill out in detail the card included in the kit.

After Your Visit

- The communion kit should be returned to the church office and left on the front desk.
- The card should be placed in Anita's mailbox in the office. This card is very important for our records.

Thank you for this ministry. Your faithful work is a great blessing to the church.



ST. JAMES'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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