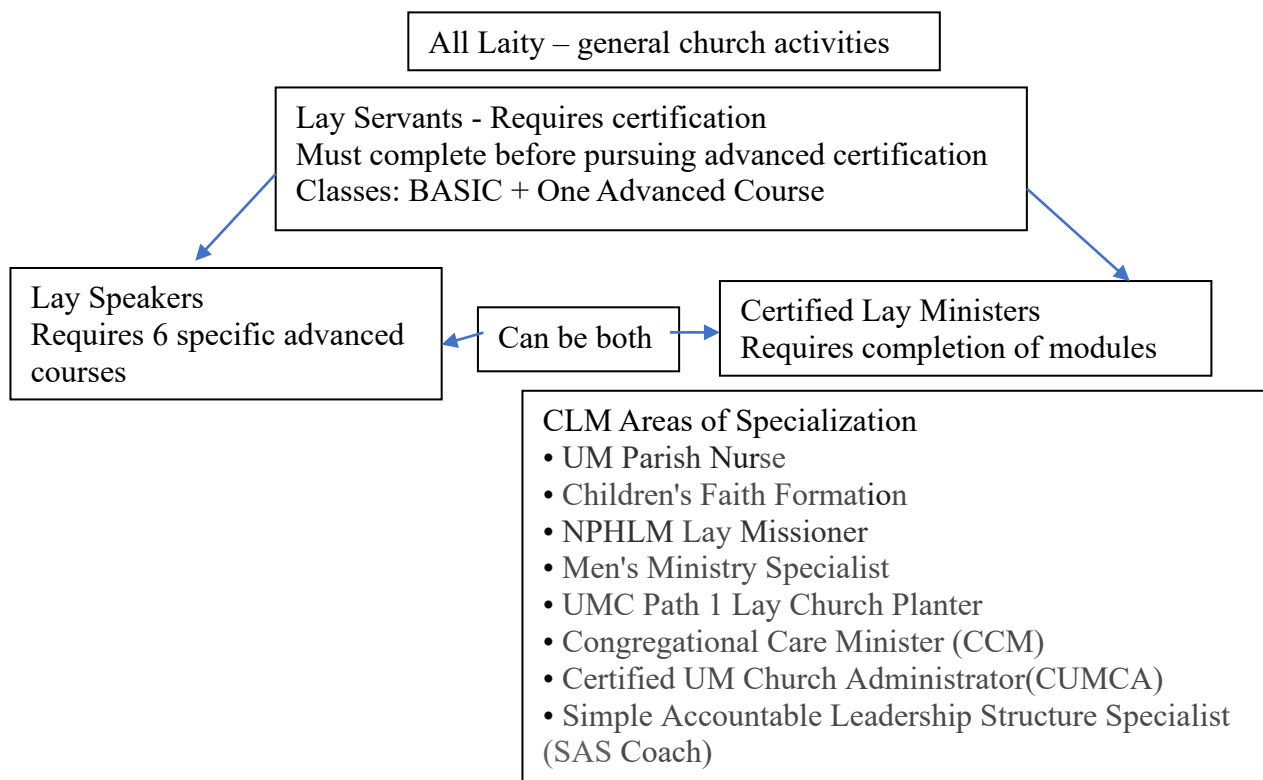


MINISTRY OF THE LAITY



Why pursue certification?

- You want to expand your church activities into a specific ministry
- You want to grow spiritually
- You want to be more educated in your beliefs and faith
- You want to learn more about God
- According to the Book of Discipline, laity are the primary agents for evangelism. Taking classes toward certification helps you be a better evangelist.
- Can help you be a better church leader.
- Provides a network of support and friendship across the Conference

Certified Lay Servants

The certified lay servant serves the local church or charge (or beyond the local church or charge) through his or her witness, leadership, and service, inspiring others to a deeper commitment to Christ and more effective discipleship. Through continued study and training, the certified lay servant should prepare to undertake one or more of the following functions, giving primary attention to service within the local church or charge, United Methodist collegiate ministry, or other United Methodist ministry setting:

- Provide leadership, assistance, and support to the program emphases of the church or other United Methodist ministry.
- Lead meetings for prayer, training, study, and discussion when requested by the pastor, district superintendent, or committee on Lay Servant Ministries.

- Conduct, or assist in conducting, services of worship, preach the Word, or give addresses when requested by the pastor, district superintendent, or committee on Lay Servant Ministries.
- Work with appropriate committees and teams that provide congregational and community leadership or foster caring ministries.
- Assist in the distribution of the elements of Holy Communion upon request by a pastor.
- Teach the Scriptures, doctrine, organization, and ministries of The United Methodist Church

Certified Lay Ministers are equipped to perform the following:

- conduct public worship, care for the congregation, assist in program leadership, develop new and existing faith communities, preach the Word, lead small groups, or establish community outreach ministries as part of a ministry team with the supervision and support of a clergyperson.
- A certified lay minister is assigned by a district superintendent.
- The certified lay minister serves to enhance the quality of ministry, much like a class leader did in early Methodism.

Certified Lay Speakers serve by preaching the Word. Courses must be taken in the following areas: Leading Worship, Leading Prayer, Discovering Spiritual Gifts, Preaching, UM Heritage, UM Polity.

Deaconesses and Home Missioners – are commissioned by United Women in Faith.

Deaconesses and Home Missioners are laypersons defined as a community who have responded to the call of God in their lives and have been consecrated by The United Methodist Church to full-time ministries of love, justice and service. They form a covenant community that is rooted in scripture, informed by history, driven by mission, ecumenical in scope and global in outreach.

Requirements:

- The professional training, education, and/or certifications for the ministry to which one is called.
- Biblical, theological, and sociological grounding in the prescribed core studies:
 - a) Old Testament
 - b) New Testament
 - c) Theology of Mission and Diakonia
 - d) History of The United Methodist Church
 - e) Polity and Doctrine of the United Methodist Church

Core studies may be taken at United Methodist institutions of higher learning or at colleges, universities, and/or seminaries that are approved by the University Senate of The United Methodist Church. Intensive courses (one- to two-week) and other alternative options are available. Prior coursework may be reviewed for approval of the core studies. Limited financial assistance based on need is available for core study coursework.

(Acceptance process includes application, transcripts, discernment, initial theology course, mental health evaluation, review assessment, candidacy, coursework, application for consecration). The candidate is paired with a coach.

All classes needed for Certification (as opposed to Deaconess) are offered by District Lay Academies and at beadisciple.com. Lay Academy courses are free of charge, but there may be a charge for books or other resources. Beadisciple.com does charge for their courses. These courses are offered by zoom. Lay Academies may be offered in person, by zoom or in a hybrid format. One may take a class from any District in the WV Conference.

A list of all classes offered by the Districts will be disseminated in the Fall.