

## How can Pastors and Congregations Develop Lay Servants?

- **Use This Brochure** - Print and distribute this brochure to all CURRENT and PROSPECTIVE Lay Servant candidates to foster better understanding.
- **Become Aware** - Lay Servant training is only currently available at one or two times per year so it is critical to be aware of the dates and communicate this to the Congregation well in advance.
- **Set Goals** - Consider setting annual goals for Lay Servant training participants, not as a “duty” but in order to bring focus. This should be done by collaboration of the Pastor, Lay Leader, and possibly the Lay Leadership Committee.
- **Be an encourager!** The best way to invite people to develop their gift is to recognize and affirm the gifts they already have. Let them know they have a unique ministry gift and how they can grow in it. Recognize Lay Servants’ accomplishments in worship.

**The Mission of the United Methodist Church is to make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.**

## Frequently Asked Questions

- **Do I need to be a Lay Servant to do ministry?**  
No! ALL believers are empowered for ministry. However Lay Servant training will equip you for ministry.
- **Where can I get info about upcoming classes?**
  - [www.eocumc.com/laity/lay-servants.html](http://www.eocumc.com/laity/lay-servants.html)
  - Call Firelands District office (419) 668-6115
  - Be a Disciple online courses - [www.beadisciple.com](http://www.beadisciple.com)
  - Email Sue Denham. [jamesdenham@windstream.net](mailto:jamesdenham@windstream.net)

## Next Steps to Vital Lay Servant Ministry

- **Consult with your pastor.**
- **Sign up for the Basic Class, or an Advanced Class if you have already taken the Basic.**
- **Do ministry. Apply what you have learned.**
- **Complete a Lay Servant Annual Report form and submit each year with your church’s charge conference documents.**
- **Take at least 1 class every three years.**
- **Invite others into ministry and onto the Lay Servant Training journey!**

## Lay Servant Courses

The Following Courses are offered periodically by the Firelands District, by other Districts, and online at the Be a Disciple website ([www.beadisciple.com](http://www.beadisciple.com)). Any of these options count toward your Lay Servant training record.

- **Lay Servant Basic Course**- Introduces the basics of ministry and leadership in the Wesleyan tradition
- **Each One a Minister**- Helps participants understand their spiritual gifts and how the church can use them to fulfill its ministry
- **Living Our Beliefs**- Explores the special gifts of theology, witness, and organization of The United Methodist Church
- **Living Together in the UM Connection** - Overview of the structure and organization of The United Methodist Church (polity)
- **Leading Worship**- Prepares the Lay Servant for leading worship
- **Leading Prayer**- Helps participant grow in confidence and skill in personal and public prayer

### For Lay Speaker, take at least one of the following:

- **You Can Preach!** - For those called to preach in the pastor’s absence
- **From Your Heart to Theirs** - Beyond the basics of public speaking, addresses the foundations necessary for preparing an engaging sermon.
- **Dancing With Words**- learn the skill of effective storytelling

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## A Guide for Pastors And Congregations



**What is a Lay Servant?**

**Why become a Lay Servant?**

**How to become a Lay Servant**

**What is the purpose / responsibility of Lay Servant Ministry?**

**How can pastors and congregations develop Lay Servants?**

**Firelands District Lay Servant Committee  
Sue Denham - Chairperson**

# What is a Lay Servant?

(A good question!)

There are so many terms that begin with “Lay” in our church, it can be confusing. - *Lay person, lay leader, lay servant, lay member*. The purpose of this document is to clarify the meaning and importance of Lay Servant ministry.

## Glossary\*

- **Lay Person / Laity** - Everyone in the church except the appointed pastor. In short, “the people.”
- **Lay Leader** - A lay officer of the church appointed by the congregation whose primary responsibility it is to encourage, empower, and enable the ministry of lay persons, and to assist the pastor in doing the same. (See UM Book of Discipline ¶ 251)
- **Lay Servant** - Any lay person who has successfully completed the Basic Lay Servant Training class, and who is actively ministering to others.
- **Certified Lay Servant** - A sub-class of Lay Servants who has successfully completed at least one Advanced Lay Servant Class and is actively ministering to others.
- **Certified Lay Speaker** - A sub-class of Lay Servants who desires to preach as a lay person, who has completed the Advanced Lay Servant preaching courses, who has been approved by the District and Conference, and who is actively ministering to others.
- **Lay Delegate** - A lay person who has been appointed by the congregation to be a voting representative (or “member”) of the Annual Conference—the governing meeting of our church that meets each June at Lakeside, Ohio.
- **Lay Liturgist or Reader** - A lay person who leads the reading of scripture or prayers during worship.
- **Ministry** - *ANY* act of worship or of service to others within or outside the church, done in Jesus’ name.

**Note\*** The roles listed above are each unique but not exclusive. A person can and often does act in one or several of these roles.

# Why Become a Lay Servant?

“If lastly, you unite together, to encourage and help each other in thus working out your salvation, and for that end *watch over one another in love*, you are they whom I mean by Methodists”.

- John Wesley—Founder of Methodism

As Methodists, we grow and walk *TOGETHER*. The Lay Servant Training program is one of the ways that we, as United Methodists, train one another to grow in ministry skills, that is, to “watch over one another in love.”

## Benefits of Lay Servant Training

- **Personal Faith Growth** - Training will increase your faith understanding of yourself and of our church.
- **Knowledge Growth** - Lay Servant Training will give you a better understanding of the beliefs of our church and the distinctive perspectives United Methodists bring to ministry.
- **Leadership Growth** - Not everyone has the gift of Leadership, but all can learn to lead in their own unique way. Training can give *you* confidence to lead.
- **Connection** - Training will introduce you to a wider network of believers who can encourage you and give you a broader perspective on your church.
- **Resources** - Lay Servants are introduced to the vast resources and support that our District and Conference offer to help you and to your church to thrive.
- **Ministry Ideas** - Training will give you fresh ideas and inspiration for the many possible ministries that exist.
- **Discernment** - Are you sensing God urging you to “step up” in some way? Lay Servant training can help you begin to discern your call. It can even be a first step to exploring a call to ordained ministry!
- **Preaching Principles** - If you are called to preach, Lay Speaker courses will give you a foundation for good preaching and connect you to opportunities to develop your gift.
- **Methodism** - Training will give you a better understanding of what it means to be a United Methodist.

# How to Become a Lay Servant?

“Come, follow me,” Jesus said,  
“and I will send you out to fish for people.”

Jesus - Matthew 4:19

## Lay Servant Steps, and Responsibilities

- **Inquire with your pastor** - Tell your pastor that you are interested in Lay Servant Training. She or he can get you needed information.
- **Sign up for a class!** There is usually a fee of \$10-25 for the course, which often includes a book and lunch. Be prepared to read the book in advance and perhaps do a preparatory assignment. Your instructor will contact you in advance to advise. Be sure you understand and complete all course requirements to get credit. Classes are offered in all the districts and by the East Ohio Conference (online information at <http://www.eocumc.com/laity/lay-servants.html>). Any class counts for your Lay Servant training record.
- **Do Ministry!** Taking a class is a good start, but the only way to really be a Lay Servant is...well, *to SERVE*. Find a place you can serve in your church or community, or if already serving, look for ways to apply what you have learned. One key service is to invite others on the Lay Servant journey.
- **Continue to Grow!** You will be encouraged to take one classes every three years, to grow spiritually, and to apply your God-given ministry gifts. Each year, complete a Lay Servant Annual Report form which will help you to reflect on how you have grown.

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**Fun Fact:**  
**There are currently 111 Lay Servants in the Firelands District and 1250 in the East Ohio Conference!**  
**You are in good company!**