

REPORT OF THE THREE RIVERS DISTRICT LAY SERVANT COMMITTEE

May 2, 2021

Since this Committee's report to the District Conference last year on April 30, 2020, we have been unable to meet. This has been common with other Districts throughout the East Ohio Conference due to the Covid-19 crisis. The District Directors of Lay Servant Ministries and members of this Committee will have their first meeting on April 19, 2021 in order to begin planning for the upcoming year.

Current Numbers

As of this date the number of individuals in the District who have taken courses and obtained some form of certification are as follows:

Lay Minister – 1
Certified Lay Speaker – 8
Certified Lay Servant – 38
Basic – 16

Recent Lay Servant Changes

The Conference Committee on Lay Servant Ministries (LSM) has updated the East Ohio Conference lay servant categories to reflect changes made in *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016*. The Discipline no longer uses "Local (Basic) Lay Servant" as an LSM category. This change will take effect July 1, 2021.

Persons are encouraged to take the Basic LSM course as a way to grow as a disciple, as a step toward discerning a call to lay ministry, or as a step in becoming a certified lay servant, certified lay speaker, or certified lay minister. A certificate of completion is issued for Basic training, but persons will not apply to become a lay servant at that point. Persons may apply to become a certified lay servant after completion of both the Basic and any Advanced course. Persons completing the Basic course will no longer need to fill out the Lay Servant Annual Report to charge conference. All Certified Lay Servant categories will continue to fill out the annual report. **Read the revised report** and please do not use prior year reports.

Due to the COVID pandemic, the LSM Committee has also extended the deadline requiring that certified lay servants and certified lay speakers must complete an Advanced course every three years. Persons whose last Advanced course was completed in 2017, 2018, or 2019 must take an Advanced course in 2021 or 2022 to be renewed. The LSM Committee will review the format and availability of courses in order to provide multiple alternatives for training in our current environment. **BeADisciple** continues to be an excellent resource for online training as well.

Please contact the District Co-Directors of Lay Ministries if you have any questions or need additional information.

Guidelines for Lay Servant Annual Reports

Individuals in the District continue to utilize the report form which was developed in 2020. The form helps individuals certified in the District share their yearly personal growth in their walk with the Lord.

Lay Servant Training

A Fall training is in the planning stages. The specific date and time will be released soon. The course of study will be "*Shaping the Prayers of the People*", and the Basic course on "*Lay Servant Ministries*."

Lay Servant Pictorial Directory

Amanda Armstrong, the previous District Director of Lay Servant Ministries, established the 2019-2020 District Directory containing photos and contact information for Three Rivers Lay Servants. In addition, Amanda also initiated a Three Rivers District Lay Servant Ministries Facebook page. Both of these avenues of communication will be continued as well as having articles in the District newsletter.

District Directors

Effective as of July 1, 2020, Deb and Steve Gilson began serving as District Co-Directors of Lay Servant Ministries. The previous District Director, Amanda Armstrong began serving as the Conference Director of Lay Servant Ministries also on July 1, 2020.

Lay Servant and Pastor "Of the Year"

The East Ohio Conference Committee on Lay Servant Ministries met on March 6, 2021. At that time, it was decided that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, that none of the Districts would be selecting individuals to honor. However, the Three Rivers District in wanting to honor those individuals who have continued to make a difference during the past year, will be selecting these individuals soon.

Committee Members

This Committee recently had several members resign in order to serve the Lord in other capacities. We have been grateful for their leadership, labors, and dedication throughout the year. Those members who have resigned include: Joy Campbell, Rev. Gary Campbell, and Laura Coykendall. In addition, Rev. Ed Fashbaugh our District Superintendent will become the Conference Director of Connectional Ministries on July 1, 2021. Rev. Kelly Brown will become the new District Superintendent and a member of this Committee as of July 1, 2021.

This Committee will continue to move forward with training and exploration of opportunities for all members in the Three Rivers District to serve Christ and His Church. We do this to the glory of God and in order to spread the news of the Gospel.

Deb and Steve Gilson
District Co-Directors of Lay Servant Ministries

Lay Members:
Joy Campbell
Laura Coykendall
Jackie Lewis
Patty Maag

Clergy Members:
Pastor John Armstrong
Rev. Gary Campbell
Rev. Ed Fashbaugh, D.S.
Pastor Pamela Lashley