

Licensing Requirements for the Worship Leader

from the Commission on Ministry of the Diocese of Hawai'i

The Worship Leader is defined in the Canons of The Episcopal Church as “a lay person who regularly leads public worship under the direction of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith” (Title III, Canon 4, Section 4).

In the Diocese of Hawai'i, a Worship Leader is someone licensed to lead Morning or Evening Prayer in a congregation — for example, in the following circumstances:

- No priest is resident in the congregation because the church is in a search process
- The priest is ill for a regularly scheduled worship service
- The congregation that does not have a priest in residence and the worship leaders serves at the pleasure of the bishop
- The Daily Office is a regular part of the church's worship life in addition to regular Eucharist (for example, Evening Prayer on a Sunday or weekday evening, or Morning Prayer on a weekday morning).

The Worship Leader must be a confirmed communicant in good standing of the Episcopal Church and in the congregation in which he/she will serve. The applicant should have been invited to, and helped in the discernment of, this ministry by the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or community of faith.

Licensing in one congregation does not entitle the Worship Leader to lead worship in another congregation of which he/she is not a communicant.

The Worship Leader must be at least 18 years of age.

The Worship Leader should be able to do the following:

- Know the differences between the Eucharist and the Daily Office, in structure and theology.
- Know where to find and how to use the Revised Common Lectionary and the Daily Lectionary, and should know the differences between the two lectionaries.
- Should already have been serving as a lector, so that the Worship Leader already has experience and is comfortable with speaking in front of a group.
- Know the history and format/structure of the Daily Office, not just in an intellectual sense, but also in practice, so that he/she can lead the congregation in worship smoothly and with confidence, recognizing that others are not likely to be familiar with the structure.

- Is familiar with the seasons of the Church year and how choices for the various elements in the Daily Office might vary depending on the season.
- Know how to choose the different elements in the Daily Office (collects, canticles, suffrages, invitatory psalm).
- Know where to find sources of musical settings for the canticles and the psalms, if desired, or hymns and songs that could substitute for them.
- Be familiar with the customs of the Diocese of Hawai‘i and of the congregation, if any.

The Worship Leader is not licensed to preach his/her own sermon. Instead, he/she may read a sermon downloaded from the following Web site:
http://www.episcopalchurch.org/sermons_that_work.htm. Any other sermon sources must be approved by the Bishop before being used.