

Overview



Strong lay leadership is a hallmark of the Unitarian Universalist faith tradition. The priesthood and prophethood of all believers has been a theological stance since our movement began. While many ordained ministers have been visionary leaders in our faith, we are equally supported by many talented and committed lay members. Not everyone feels the call to the ordained ministry, but the Central East Region offers an alternative to becoming a professional minister.

The program was started by Rev. Gordon McKeeman in 1976. Its focus and structure represented his interpretation of our Universalist legacies regarding the importance of strong lay leadership and the need for leadership that emerges from within congregations.

The Commissioned Lay Ministry (CLM) program is designed to help lay leaders take their ministry and service to a deeper level.

Commissioned Lay Ministry Contacts:

Co-Chairs of the CLM Council:

Rev. Dr. Elaine Strawn

Jeff Donahue, CLM

Contact them at
clmprogram@cerguua.org

For more information and to download all the necessary forms and applications visit

www.uua.org/central-east/programs/cll

What Ministers say about the program:

"My experience of the CLM program has been as a mentor to several different lay leaders over the years. One of these, aided [her] congregation through a particularly difficult time and helped lay the groundwork for the congregation to [enthusiastically] call a new minister. I believe totally in this vital program."

Rev. Elaine Strawn, Wooster, OH
UU Fellowship of Wayne County

"I can absolutely say for myself that my work as a professional minister has been deeply enriched and extended by my work with the CLMs within and outside of my congregation."

Rev. Susan Ritchie, Lewis Center, OH
North UU Congregation

CLM



Commissioned Lay Ministry Program



**Strong Lay Leaders
=
Stronger Congregations!**

Commissioned Lay Minister Program

Who Should Consider the Program?

A good CLM candidate is already an active and committed lay member of a Unitarian Universalist congregation; someone who has a high level of integrity and has earned the respect of fellow congregants. They want a deeper grounding in Unitarian Universalism and want to gain more wisdom about the inner workings of the church. Most CLMs have particular gifts to offer and feel drawn to a particular area of ministry where they would like to expand their understanding and improve their skills. Typical areas of focus include:

- worship
- pastoral care
- adult religious education
- membership engagement
- leadership development
- leading rites of passage
- social justice organizing
- denominational connections

...though the program is flexible enough to develop individualized training in any area.



Overview of the Process

Interested aspirants should read through the materials on the CER website and talk to their congregation's governing board and minister(s). If all of the parties agree that the CLM Program looks like a good fit and will serve the congregation's mission, the aspirant can fill out the application materials and request an interview with the CLM Council.



Those who are accepted into the program are considered to be "CLM Candidates." They are assigned a liaison to the CLM Council to track their progress, and are also assigned a mentor, who works with the candidate in developing a learning/serving plan. A typical candidate takes 2-4 years to complete the training.

When the mentor feels the candidate has completed the needed training, the candidate completes additional paperwork and schedules an interview with the CLM Council. Upon



successful completion of the interview, the candidates are issued a Commissioned Lay Ministry eligibility letter, which is good for three years. The candidate's name and eligibility letter are then forwarded to their home congregation's board for commissioning.



CLMs who wish to continue to serve after the initial commissioning can apply for a renewal. Each renewal is also good for three years. Once commissioned, a CLM can also apply to solemnize weddings in many states.

www.uua.org/central-east/program/cl

What CLMs have to say:

I became a CLM because I wanted to be more knowledgeable in my help to our congregation and to (the minister). I feel much joy and centered when I am doing church work whether it be committee work or taking a class or teaching a class. This is where I feel my soul purpose being fulfilled, where I feel the most like my true self.

Teri Cornell, Commissioned Lay Minister
North UU Congregation, Lewis Center, OH