



Leading Worship Well in Local Mission Partnerships ***Bishop's Guidelines and Regulations***

In the Church of England, the Bishop and God's People share in worship. As *Time to Change Together* advances it is important that churches and ministers in Local Mission Partnerships lead worship well, understanding what is allowed and what is not allowed.

I am aware of varying practice and interpretation of rules across the diocese and therefore instigating an amnesty so that people and places can align with Canon Law, episcopal oversight, and best practice in mission and ministry. The *Bishop's Guidelines and Regulations* outlined below must be followed. Training and resources will be provided – the College of St Hugh has a Liturgies Project ongoing.

Transition to fresh ways of worshipping is challenging. However, I am confident that moving forward we will flourish with the benefits of working together in mission and ministry. Our vocation is building up the body of Christ, serving the people of Greater Lincolnshire.

Yours ever in Christ,

The Rt Revd Stephen Conway
Bishop of Ely
Acting Bishop of Lincoln

Lent 2023

1 Church Types

All Churches have indicated their Church Type 1-5 as best describing their local aspiration and capacity for mission and ministry. These choices have direct implications for worship and patterns of services. A Refresher Summary of Types is found at the end of the guidelines.

Our Type 3 churches will particularly value clarity and support. The 'regular worship' implicit in such churches will need to be more creative and flexible. People will take time to appreciate different worship and a variety of ministers week by week.

2 Pattern of Services Oversight

Incumbents working together in Local Mission Partnerships have oversight of worship, consulting with laity and ministers, and arranging an Agreed Pattern of Services.

Local churches may not make ad hoc arrangements outside the Agreed Pattern of Services. Clergy, Readers and Lay Ministers may not make freelance arrangements outside the Agreed Pattern of Services.

3 Services of the Word

All persons ministering (under 3) will require appropriate and current DBS and Safeguarding Training overseen by our Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

Under the Canons, Churchwardens are given the opportunity to say Morning or Evening Prayer publicly in their Parish Church in the absence of an authorised minister. In some places using this provision within local service rotas may prove helpful.

Other Services of the Word on Sundays or weekdays (devised in line with *Common Worship*) may be led by Clergy, Readers, Authorised Lay Ministers and Licensed Lay Workers.

Preaching on any regular basis may only be undertaken by those who hold the Bishop's licence or have Permission to Officiate. Provision can be made for people who will be in the category of Occasional Preachers who will need minuted PCC validation before the Bishop's permission is sought in all cases. The Bishop may require training for ministers. The regular Homily resources on the diocesan website may assist: <https://www.lincoln.anglican.org/the-homilies-project>.

4 Pioneering Worship

The *Guidelines and Regulations* are supportive of the rich variety of innovative worship in mission and outreach and should be followed accordingly. For example, All-Age, Café Church, Messy Church, Forest Church, School Church, and rural and urban community events (fêtes, car boot sales, sports) with worship content are to be encouraged.

5 Making Eucharist and Holy Communion

Only Priests with a licence or Permission to Officiate may preside at a Celebration of the Eucharist ('Making Eucharist') using authorised Church of England services, within the Agreed Pattern of Services.

Ecumenical collaboration must abide by Church of England Canons and rules for ecumenical sharing of worship, ministers and buildings. Advice should be sought from your Archdeacon before arranging collaboration.

6 Holy Communion by Extension

There can be misunderstandings and irregular practices of Holy Communion by Extension. The House of Bishops' guidelines are clear: the Diocesan Bishop's written permission should be requested on each occasion when Holy Communion by Extension is required. It should rarely be used; normally in pastoral emergencies or in acute short-term circumstances.

In particular, Holy Communion by Extension cannot be used for maintaining services of Holy Communion within the Agreed Pattern of Services of Local Mission Partnerships, simply because of a shortage of priests.

When permitted by the Bishop, Holy Communion by Extension facilitates the transport of consecrated bread and wine directly from a Celebration of the Eucharist in one church, normally on a Sunday, to a congregation gathered elsewhere for their service the same day.

In the Diocese of Lincoln, the appropriate Minister to provide Holy Communion by Extension is a Deacon or Reader who has completed the necessary training module. Deacons and Readers are encouraged to provide a sermon, homily or reflection at a Service of Holy Communion by Extension.

The order of service to be used by congregations and Deacons or Readers in this diocese is *Public Worship with Communion by Extension (2001)* which must on each occasion be followed. [Available on the Church of England website](#) and [from Church House Bookshop](#), the order provides rules, guidelines, materials and a section of approved content.

Under no circumstances should the Deacon or Reader keep or delay quantities of consecrated bread and wine at their home or elsewhere.

Holy Communion by Extension is different from taking the Reserved Sacrament from a church to members at home or in care, etc., which is done by Clergy, Readers, Lay Ministers and pastoral teams in local churches. The Reserved Sacrament must not be scaled up to provide Holy Communion for congregations within the Agreed Pattern of Services.

7 Quality Assurance and Discipline

In Local Mission Partnerships, Incumbents and the Rural Dean have oversight of the quality of worship within the Agreed Pattern of Services, i.e. that the rota is reliable, and that the content of services and leadership of ministers is good. Worship excellence can be achieved anywhere, however these guidelines should not make excellence the enemy of good enough worship.

Breaches of the *Bishop's Guidelines and Regulations* for worship should normally be rectified locally by the Rural or Partnership Dean. If this proves difficult, the matter should be referred to the Archdeacon.

8 Advice and Disagreements

The Archdeacon is well placed to give advice and can guide Local Mission Partnerships through disagreements and suggest solutions.

Church Types and patterns of worship for LMPs

A refresher of agreed recommendations

Type 1

A main focus for ministry across an LMP or together with others across a Deanery Partnership. High quality of worship, nurture, welcome, music, teaching, online presence. Large USA, AWA and ER, including Fresh Expressions, multiple ministries and congregations. Flexible facilities. A base for ministry, administration and collegial prayer and collaboration for a family of churches. A resource for other churches. A place of gathering for other churches periodically.

High quality, varied, attractive and regular worship.

Type 2

Whole church commitment to growth. A centre for a significant part of an LMP. Good quality of worship, nurture, welcome, music, teaching, online presence. USA, AWA and ER able to grow, maybe including Fresh Expressions.

Good quality, varied, attractive and regular worship, every Sunday and some weekdays. Prayer for the immediate community, the LMP family of churches and the world.

Type 3

A church in a small but significant community, not identified and resourced as a Type 1 or 2 Mission Church, but with sufficient local support and resources to remain as an active place of worship and an identifiable and self-determining church community. A centre and a focus for some worship and belonging for its community, sharing and connected, for its enrichment, sacramental life and collaborative mission and ministry, with one or more Local Mission Churches.

Open and available for private prayer and community activities. Regular worship (e.g. monthly), mainly locally led. Support from LMP for occasional festival events.

Type 4

Nationally and locally defined as Celebration or Festival Churches. Churches which remain as places of worship, but which cannot or do not wish to offer regular worship.

They can be used for Festival or Celebration events – occasional services at, say, Harvest and Christmas. Also places for the spiritual and shared journeys of local residents – weddings and funerals.

Type 5

A Church destined for redundancy and becoming invested in another body, i.e, a Diocesan Churches Trust.

No worship.