

# **Lay Reader Training Course**

## **Session IV: Leading Prayer**

**The Anglican Diocese of Edmonton**

**Session held on December 6, 2008 at St. David's Anglican Church  
Presented by Mr. Ralph Morris and Rev. Mary Charlotte Wilcox**

**Last Revised February 11, 2009**

## Instructions for Clergy/Supervisors

The Lay Reader training course has been compiled into modules to allow those who missed a session or two to complete it in their local parish, under the supervision and teaching of the rector, and the guidance of the course curriculum. It is the responsibility of the Lay Reader candidate to contact the rector and to arrange time to meet and work through the material. It is the responsibility of the rector to ensure that the course material is **fully** covered and understood, as well as to contact the program co-ordinator to report the completion of any modules.

This module's layout is designed to be printed double-sided. Sections are arranged individually so you can print out the specific pages you need.

Set aside a significant portion of time with your Lay Reader candidate to go through the material. The original sessions provided four hours of discussion and instruction, broken up by time for breaks. Depending on the candidate, you may need to schedule several shorter sessions to complete the material in question.

Spend time on demonstration. Make sure that the candidate is walked through the experience of organizing, planning, and leading services. Provide tips and practical hints as they occur to you.

Each session begins with a discussion related to the candidate's prior experiences or understanding of the topic covered. Do not skip this step to move directly into instruction. Spending time in general discussion at the beginning makes deeper learning and discussion possible later in the session.

Expect and encourage questions. Be prepared to discuss your answers.

The Diocesan expectation of Lay Readers is that they will be trained to plan and lead liturgies using both the *Book of Common Prayer* and *Book of Alternative Services*. At the same time, it is understood that Lay Readers function in the context of the practice of their local parish. Therefore, Lay Reader candidates will be expected to learn and gain competence in the full range of authorized liturgies, rubrics, and practices, while **also** learning the rector's guidelines for the liturgical practice appropriate to the parish. Do not sacrifice one for the other.

Last, remember that you are equipping a minister. Take time to pray together.

**\*\* If you have any questions, contact Rev. Cameron Burns, Program Co-ordinator \*\***

## Session Learning Goals

At the end of this session, the candidates will:

1. Be able to lead liturgical prayer, using authorized litanies and written prayer
  - a. By reviewing the litanies of the *BCP* and *BAS*
  - b. By discussing the logic of the written prayers in the *BCP* and *BAS*
  - c. By spending some time writing prayers
  - d. By reviewing some resources for liturgical prayer (prayer cycles)
2. Be able to be present to others in the context of prayer
  - a. By discussing one's own experience of prayer
  - b. By learning some basic points of pastoral presence
  - c. By spending some time praying for others

## Session Plan

The following is the agenda from the last presentation of this session:

9:30 am	Doors Open, Coffee/Tea Available
10:00 am	Morning Prayer
10:30 am	Talking About Prayer
11:30 am	Break (15 minutes)
11:45 am	Being Present to Others in Prayer
12:45 pm	Lunch (45 minutes)
1:30 pm	Leading Liturgical Prayer
2:30 pm	Break (15 minutes)
2:45 pm	Practice Time/Closing, Questions
4:00 pm	Evening Prayer

## Session Instruction

### ***Session Preparation***

Read over the lesson materials. Make sure that you have a *BCP*, a *BAS*, and a Bible on hand (the Bible marked if necessary). Get some tea/coffee ready.

### ***Greeting and Prayer***

It is helpful to begin the session with a time of prayer. Consider using Morning Prayer, as it helps the candidate(s) to become familiar with the liturgy. Having the candidate(s) lead the prayer time is also beneficial.

### ***Talking About Prayer: Our Own Experiences (~30 minutes)***

Ask the candidate(s) to relay a recent experience of personal prayer. Encourage the candidate to describe the experience as fully as possible. Here are some helpful questions to aid reflection in relation to this experience:

- How did you feel during the experience? (Encourage the candidate(s) to use emotional words)
- What was the environment of prayer like? (Encourage the candidate(s) to use sensory words, e.g., "I saw," "I heard," etc.)
- What did the experience teach you? (Encourage the candidate(s) to use rational/conceptual words)
- What was it about that experience that allows you to label it as "prayer"?

Next, ask the candidate(s) to discuss how their experience of personal prayer relates to their experience of corporate prayer. It may help the candidate(s) to encourage them to take a minute and reflect on their last experience of corporate prayer in the parish (using the prior reflection questions).

- In what way(s) are these two experiences (personal and corporate) similar?
- In what way(s) are these two experiences different?
- What is it about these two experiences that allows you to label them both as "prayer"?

Ask the candidate(s) how they feel about leading prayers in the context of worship. What feelings are triggered?

Make sure to take notes (ask the candidate(s) for permission first) of important feelings, images, concepts, or thoughts throughout this section. These will greatly help you to assess how best to work through the remaining material, as well as any additional conversation that you may wish to have. As you wrap up the discussion, it is important to normalize any concerns, doubts, or fears that the candidate(s) may express in relation to leading prayers (since it can seem very daunting).

### ***Talking About Prayer: Prayer And Praying (~30 minutes)***

Begin by suggesting that the most important part about leading prayer is that the leader is someone who prays. There should never be a discord between leading prayer in a public service and one's own life of prayer: ideally, "leading prayer" simply means praying publicly as a leader in the community, and inviting others into that space and place of offering prayer to God. Whether written or spontaneous, prayers are best offered when they connect with one's own daily spiritual self-offering.

Ask the candidate(s) to discuss their own discipline of prayer. Encourage the candidate(s) to be as candid as possible and to consider where they feel that they are at this moment in relation to their ability and comfort in praying. Do they pray daily? Do they know how to pray? At this point, it may be necessary to have further discussion regarding basic instruction in prayer, depending on the experience level of the candidate(s).<sup>1</sup>

This is a point where it would be helpful to provide practical tips or hints in regards to the discipline of prayer. As well, here are four "steps" for prayer, which help in building up one's depth and trust in prayer:

- Begin by praying for the grace to receive God's love, since everything in the spiritual life comes from this assurance. Receiving the love of God allows the Christian to respond in thanksgiving, which itself is the core discipline of the Christian life.
- Pray for the grace to experience the convicting and liberating power of the Holy Spirit. Here we do not ask for false or cheap guilt; rather, we ask to be given the grace to be humbly allow ourselves to accept God's transformation of our lives. Without this step, it will be difficult at best to find God's peace and the liberating power of the Spirit.
- Pray to experience the illuminating power of God's truth. This helps us to stand in the difficult place of being remade and renewed in Christ's image, as well as to support our brothers and sisters in their own lives of growth.
- Pray for the grace and patience to rest in the Lord. The most difficult aspect of the spiritual life is in trusting fully in God. This impacts our ability to truly bring supplications, intercessions, and thanksgivings to God, since we are always tempted to stand in our own strength and not to rely upon the Lord.

Throughout this discussion, it is extremely important to encourage, support, and build up the candidate(s) in regard to their sense of the value of their life of prayer. Make sure to praise their efforts, and to affirm God's loving pleasure in the sincere work of His servants, regardless of how significant or insignificant it might feel like to them. Finally, encourage the candidate(s) to continue deepening their life of prayer.

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<sup>1</sup> The Lay Reader Training Program assumes a basic familiarity with prayer on the part of the candidate(s).

### ***Being Present and Attentive In Prayer (~30 Minutes)***

Part of the challenge of leading prayer lies in the fact that the leader needs to be attentive to God as well as the people whom he/she is leading in prayer. It is helpful to take some time working on how to be more attentive in our prayer leadership.

Suggest to the candidate(s) that if their own lives of prayer are vibrant, being attentive to God while leading prayer is exactly the same as being attentive to God while offering one's own private devotions:

- While it seems obvious, it needs to be emphasized—if you are leading written prayers, *pray* them (don't just *read* them).
- It helps to hold back a little, and not to rush through the prayers. Praying more slowly allows you to have more time and energy to focus on what God might be leading you to pray.
- One way to combat anxiety (or "stage fright") is to make sure to pause for a few seconds before you start. Take a deep breath, and begin slowly.
- Be careful of the temptation to "perform." Keep your voice relaxed, and let the prayer flow naturally. Don't "force" a mood or manner.
- Keep a portion of your attention in reserve, waiting (and expecting) that God will guide your leading of prayer. Experience will teach you to better recognize God's prompting.

Being attentive to others while leading prayer, although very similar, can be a little more complicated.

- Being attentive to others is important because the prayer leader does not offer prayer *on behalf* of the others. Instead, the prayer leader creates a structure of prayer through his/her leadership, and *invites* the others to join in. The prayer leader *enables* the others to better lift up their own prayers with their brothers and sisters.
- Since the task of the leader is to *invite* and *engage* the others to join in, being attentive to others helps various aspects of the leader's prayer—from the tone of speech, to the inflection of prayer, to the emphases, stresses, and pauses during the prayers. All of these (and more) are valid while leading prayer, so long as they are not used simply for rhetorical effect.
- Ask the candidate(s) to consider the example of the *Kyrie Eleison* ("Lord, have mercy" / "Christ, have mercy" / "Lord, have mercy"). Ask the candidate(s) to lead you in that prayer (with you taking the congregational response). Ask the candidate(s) to change how they lead their portion—ask them to try praying it more quickly, more slowly, with an emphasis on "Lord," or with a stress on the word "mercy."
- Next, ask the candidate(s) to consider how they might lead the *Kyrie Eleison* with a group celebrating a wedding, a group mourning a death, or a group meeting in a small bible study group.
- Being attentive to others involves reserving attention to be able to hold the others in one's conscious thought; in that way, they affect one's offering of prayer in the moment.

By being attentive to God and others at the same time in one's prayer leadership, the prayer leader will find that he/she can be present in any prayer circumstance, while leading prayer in a way that is dynamic, passionate, natural, and appropriate—whether it is written or not. The key is to hold back a bit to allow your prayer to be shaped; the rest is simply speaking words humbly from your heart.

### ***Leading Liturgical Prayer (~60 Minutes)***

NOTE: This section presumes that the candidate(s) have completed session one "Introduction and the Daily Offices." If that is not the case, please complete that session first. Several pertinent handouts from that session are included in the appendix to this module.

It is helpful to begin by reviewing the liturgical context in which these prayers are offered.

- In the Daily Offices, the Litany follows the Service of the Word (if needed, print out the "Elements of the Daily Offices" sheet from the appendix for review).
- In Eucharistic services, the Litany follows the Service of the Word and leads into the celebration of Communion.
- In pastoral situations, a service appropriate to the context is led (e.g., "Ministry to the Sick"), of which a component is a very specific Litany.
- So, in general public worship, the Litany follows the readings, as a form of response in faith from the community.

Next, it is helpful to remember that prayer has a purpose to it, which means that there are different sorts of prayer for different situations or needs:

- Prayers of *adoration* are simply that—expressions of our love for God.
- Prayers of *supplication* are prayers where we bring our own needs before God. Generally, we request something of God.
- Prayers of *intercession* are prayers where we bring the needs of others before God. We ask that God act in the lives of others.
- Prayers of *penitence* are prayers that serve to allow us to confess our sin before God and seek healing, reconciliation, and forgiveness.
- Prayers of *thanksgiving* are a response to a blessing in our lives, for which we render thanks.

These categories are especially useful in keeping focus while writing our own prayers (or offering spontaneous prayer), but they are also very helpful when thinking about choosing one of the many optional prayers available to be used in the *BCP* and *BAS*.

Collects are a special form of prayer, meant to conclude a section of prayer by "collecting" the previous prayers and wrapping things up. Litanies in services of Morning and Evening Prayer end with a collect; litanies in Eucharistic services do not. The collect has a four-part structure to it:



- The address – The collect begins by addressing God (e.g., “O Lord,”)
- The invocation – The collect continues by referring to an aspect of God which relates to the petition (e.g., “who has brought us safely to this day,”)
- The petition – The collect then names the specific request or need being brought before God (e.g., “guide us waking and guard us sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we may rest in peace.”)
- The doxology – The collect concludes by praising God as Trinity in the sure hope that God has heard the prayer (e.g., “through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.”)

At this point, take out a *BCP* and *BAS*, and together work through the litanies for the services of Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Holy Eucharist (including the Great Litany, which is an option in both prayer books for MP/EP). As you do so, note carefully the rubrics regarding what choices and options there are for the prayer leader to choose from. As well, make sure to carefully note where additional prayer materials can be found in each prayer book. A few key points to notice:

- In the *BCP*, additional prayers can be found on pages 37-64
- In the *BCP*, important rubrics regarding the litanies are found on: pages 11, 12, 13, and 14 for Morning Prayer; page 23 and 24 for Evening Prayer; and page 75 for Eucharist (“prayers of the people”).
- In the *BAS*, litanies, general thanksgiving prayers, and other collects can be found on pages 110-133 and 138-143. Supplementary prayers for various occasions can be found on pages 675-683.
- In the *BAS*, important rubrics regarding the litanies are found on: page 53 for Morning Prayer; page 70 for Evening Prayer; page 110 for litany choices; and page 190 for Eucharist (“The Prayers of the People”).
- The rubrics of the *BCP* presume that prayers are written (in the “ordinary,” the *BCP* itself, or by other “lawful authority.”) The *BCP* does not grant the prayer leader the latitude to alter the written prayers (except through certain explicit and exceptional rubrics). The rubrics of the *BAS*, on the other hand, explicitly allow amending any given litany, or the use of other litanies (or even extempore prayers).

Next, introduce your candidate(s) to the various prayer cycles available to your parish, including (but not limited to):

- The *Anglican Cycle of Prayer*
- The Diocesan Prayer Cycle
- The prayer cycle of the Council of the North
- You parish’s own prayer cycle.

Note that the first three are available at the Diocesan website.

Finally, close this section with a discussion on putting things together:

- Litanies are led by planning various options, and personalized by the inclusion of prayer cycle materials, as well as other prayers for world events, parish concerns, or personal concerns.

- The use of personally written or extempore prayers can help to weave these various elements together into a litany that flows naturally.
- Regardless of how much (or little) alteration, extempore prayer, or written prayer one uses, it is important to consider the prayers in advance of leading them. Extempore prayer is not “winging it,” or thoughtless, but rather, working extremely hard to remain open to what God is saying into a time of prayer, as well as being attentive to the others.

### ***Closing and Questions***

At this point, wrap up the session by going over any questions that the candidate(s) may have regarding the material for the session.

This is a time to do some practical work. Get out some paper and a prayer book, and invite the candidate(s) to organize the litany for a service of your choice. Ask them to explain their choices and provide them with feedback. As well, invite your candidate(s) to practice writing some prayers that they might offer in public worship. If they feel comfortable in doing so, work with your candidate(s) in offering extempore prayers.

This is also the appropriate time to walk through the local practices of liturgical prayer with the candidate(s), to give them a sense of what leading prayer will look like in your parish. Take some time and encourage the candidate(s) to take a turn standing and practicing leading the prayers; this will help them to feel comfortable when they lead in a public service.

Discuss with your candidate(s) what responsibilities and freedoms they will have in terms of writing or planning prayers for services, and what responsibilities you (or the parish leadership) will take on.

Last, close in prayer. You may wish to share Evening Prayer. If this is the case, consider using a different prayer book than the one used for Morning Prayer; it will help to broaden your candidate(s)' familiarity with both books.

## Appendix – Charts and Handouts

This section contains materials referred to in the Session Instruction section. The contents are as follows:

1. Basic Elements of the Daily Offices handout
2. Contents of *BCP* and *BAS* handout
3. Prayer Cycle handout
4. Prayer Cycle Examples handout

## The Basic Elements of the Services of the Daily Office

### The Penitential

The Daily Offices begin with the opportunity to kneel before God and seek healing, reconciliation, and forgiveness for one's sins.

### The Invitatory

A psalm or hymn inviting the community to enter into worship, often sung (or said) with seasonal sentences, antiphons, or versicles and responses

### The Service of the Word

Includes both the readings for the day and also the community's response to them (often a creed, but sometimes silence, or music, etc.)

### The Litany

Forgiven by God's mercy, gathered in God's presence, and nourished by God's Word, the Daily Offices conclude with prayer, followed by a dismissal

## Resources for Leading the Daily Offices – The Prayer Books

### *The Book of Common Prayer (BCP)*

<b>Page(s)</b>	<b>Component</b>	<b>Description</b>
ix-xii	The Calendar	A listing of days in the calendar year where special observances occur. Many of these observances will have their own unique set of collect and readings, while for some, the supplemental set might be appropriate (see below)
xiv-xv	Table of Moveable Feasts	A listing of the major feasts dates to 2020
xvi-xlvi	Table of Lessons	A listing of the readings for Matins and Evensong (MP and EP), organized according to the day within the Proper week
xlvi-lv	Tables of Psalms	A listing of Psalms to accompany the Table of Lessons
lvi	General Rubrics	Apply primarily to Morning Prayer
1-15	Order for Morning Prayer	The rite for services of Morning Prayer
16-17	Prayers at Midday	Very brief set of prayers (during the day)
17-24	Order for Evening Prayer	The rite for services of Evening Prayer
25-29	Additional Canticles	Additional antiphons for the Invitatory psalm, and
30-37	The Litany	An alternative intercession for Morning Prayer
37-64	Additional Prayers	Index to prayers is on pp 37-39
94-309	Proper Collects, Readings	Collects and readings proper to a specific day, as listed in the Calendar
309-330	Supplemental Collects, etc	Collects and readings for other days of observance (e.g., “for a bishop”)
331-521	The Psalter	
722-728	Order for Compline	A service for late evening, when EP has already taken place
728-736	Forms for Family Prayers	Additional prayers, including the “Prayer for Pardon through the Cross,” on pg 730

*The Book of Alternative Services (BAS)*

<b>Page(s)</b>	<b>Component</b>	<b>Description</b>
14-33	The Calendar	A listing of days in the calendar year where special observances occur.
36-43	Daily Prayer	A brief section providing a description of the development of the Daily Office liturgies in the <i>BAS</i>
45-46	Penitential Rite	Optional beginning to both Morning and Evening Prayer
47-55	Morning Prayer	The rite of Morning Prayer
56-59	Midday Prayers	A brief rite of prayers to be used during the day
60	General Rubrics (Evening Prayer)	A set of general rubrics relating to Evening Prayer, and specifically with its relation to the Service of Light
61-65	Service of Light	The rite for the Service of Light
66-71	Evening Prayer	The rite of Evening Prayer
72-95	Canticles	Generally used after readings in MP and EP
96-100	Introductory Responses	Seasonal alternatives for MP and EP
101-109	Responsories	Generally used after readings in MP and EP
110-128	Litanies	Sets of responsive intercessory prayers
129-130	Thanksgiving Prayers	Two different prayers of thanksgiving
130-132	Collects for time of day	A selection of Collects for Morning and Evening
138-143	The Great Litany	Can be used in place of a Litany (pp 110-128)
266-431	Propers of Church Year	Propers (Sentence, Collect, Readings, and Prayers) unique to specific Feasts, other Holy Days, and Sundays of the liturgical year. Multiple sets of readings are labeled according to the <i>RCL</i> or the <i>CL</i> , depending on the printing date of the specific book.
432-447	Common Propers	Propers (Sentence, Collect, and Prayers) suitable for days of lesser observance (e.g., for commemorations of past bishops, martyrs, teachers of the faith, etc.). Suggested readings for each category are found in the latter pages, rather than being combined in the listed Propers.
450-497	Daily Office Lectionary	Readings for MP and EP, organized by days within the proper weeks of the liturgical year.
675-684	Occasional Prayers	Additional prayers suited for specific occasions
705-909	The Psalter	
912-919	Music	Some music written for MP and EP

## Resources for Leading the Daily Offices – The Prayer Cycles

Prayer cycles are a help to leading any service of worship, because they provide a schedule for our intercessory prayers—helping us to focus on individual people or bodies of people, while at the same time leading us to remember our brothers and sisters around the world in prayer.

There are at least four prayer cycles that you will likely be considering when planning Morning or Evening Prayer:

### *Anglican Cycle of Prayer (ACP)*

A cycle of daily prayer designed to lead congregations in prayer for our brothers and sisters in other branches of the Anglican Communion. It is organized by Diocese, with Sunday prayers being for national church bodies.

### *Diocesan Prayer Cycle (DPC)*

A cycle of daily prayer designed to lead congregations in prayer for the Dioceses of our national church and the individual parishes in our Diocese. Sunday prayers are for Dioceses, while weekday prayers are for individual parishes.

### *Prayer Cycle of the Council of the North*

The Council of the North publishes a cycle of monthly prayer for those Diocese who partner in the work of the Council of the North's ministry in Northern Canada.

### *Your Own Parish's Prayer Cycle*

It is likely that your own parish maintains a prayer cycle. Ask your rector about it.

**NB:** The first three prayer cycles are available for download at the Diocesan website ([www.edmonton.anglican.org](http://www.edmonton.anglican.org)), under the heading of "Resources."

## Examples of Prayer Cycle Entries

### I. Anglican Cycle of Prayer

*Legend:*

Date

Name of Diocese – (National Church) or (Province, National Church) Name of Bishop

*Entry:*

February 6, 2009

Masasi – (Tanzania) The Rt. Rev'd Patrick Mwachiko

*Defintion:*

On February 6, 2009, we offer prayers for our brothers and sisters in the Diocese of Masasi of the Anglican Church of Tanzania, and especially for their bishop, the Rt. Rev. Patrick Mwachiko.

### II. Diocesan Prayer Cycle

**FEBRUARY**

**Th 5** Pray for the children's & young peoples' ministries throughout the Diocese.

**Fr 6** Inner City Pastoral Ministry; Rick Chapman, Pastor (s. Bernedene).

**Sa 7** Our Archdeacons: Kathy Bowman, Michael Sung and Michael Rolph.

### III. Prayer Cycle of the Council of the North

#### Archdeaconry of Labrador

In the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland  
and Labrador

February, 2009

Pray for Bishop Cy Pitman, for the clergy and people of the archdeaconry. Remember their ministry to those who are very isolated from each other. Pray for the Labrador Planning and Strategy Conference that meets each winter and for the annual Labrador Anglican Youth Gathering which takes place each fall and give thanks this year for our partnership ministry with the Moravian people of the Labrador North Coast.