Standards

Lay Conference Evangelist

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**Summary**

The Church exists amid a lost world to give out to each generation the Word of life, and to declare the praises of the One who called us out of darkness into wonderful light (1 Pet 2:9). The world is in such a need of a Savior and of the knowledge of God that Jesus commanded before He left, “Preach the gospel to all creation.” “Make disciples of all the nations.” Every member of the church has the great privilege of sharing the gospel with others, of leading them by God’s grace to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus, and of discipling them in their walk with the Lord.

The Lay Conference Evangelist (LCE) is a designation following a mandate of the The Book of Discipline to the Conference Area on Evangelism “to give particular emphasis to the promotion of ministries of evangelism” (630.3e). It is to help identify, encourage, empower and support laity to do the work of an evangelist.

The LCE is a person recognized by the Western PA Conference of the United Methodist Church as demonstrating gifts, passion and fruitfulness through a divine call of evangelist as a fulltime vocational focus.

**Qualifications**

1. The LCE shall be in harmony with the teachings of the Holy Scriptures as set forth in the United Methodist Articles of Religion.

2. The LCE must be a member of and loyal to the United Methodist Church, and amenable to its rules and policies.

3. Laity desiring to serve as a LCE should have a conviction of divine call to this ministry.

4. Evangelism experience within the local church shall be required.

5. Personal and professional qualifications for evangelistic work must be established to the satisfaction of the Conference Board of Evangelism.

6. The LCE shall declare his/her willingness to serve in the ministry of evangelism on a fulltime or part-time status, allowing preference to the United Methodist Church.

7. The LCE shall be evaluated annually by to the Conference Board of Evangelism. Performance evaluations from ministries served and a written report shall be presented.

8. The LCE shall develop a continuing education program for development in evangelistic ministry.

9. The LCE shall be amenable to Board of Directors of his/her non-profit ministry or a specific supervisory committee of a local church.

10. It is recommended to the leadership of the Annual Conference that they use the LCE, who are highly qualified as consultants in evangelism.

**Provisional Approval as Lay Conference Evangelist**

1. To seek approval as a LCE, the candidate will consult with his/her pastor. Together they will explore the call, pray for discernment, seek affirmation, support and guidance.

2. If pastoral consultation leads to further inquiry, the pastor will contact the Executive Evangelist of the Evangelism Cooperative (see evangelismcoop.org) with the candidate’s interest to seek approval as a LCE.

3. The Executive Evangelist of the Evangelism Cooperative will contact the inquiring candidate and make available the standards and an application for LCE.

4. Upon reception of a completed application, the Conference Board of Evangelism will conduct an interview and determination of provisional approval of the candidate as a LCE on a fulltime or part-time status.

5. Once the candidate is approved by the Conference Board of Evangelism, they will be included in legislation to the next Annual Conference. July 1 of the following Annual Conference will be the official start date.

6. A provisionally-approved full-time LCE may make a request to the Annual Conference, through the Conference Board of Evangelism, for pension and hospitalization benefits paid by the Annual Conference. The Conference Board of Evangelism may include this in their annual budget request to the Annual Conference.

**Expectations**

1. The LCE will be assigned a mentor by the Conference Board of Evangelism for a period of three years.

2. The mentor will work with the candidate to help him/her understand, evaluate, and fulfill the requirements and guidelines in the following areas:

a) All standards and procedures leading to the full approval as a LCE.

b) The calling to specialized ministry.

c) Gifts for specialized ministry in the office of evangelist.

d) Family concerns.

e) Funding and finances.

f) Structure and reporting.

g) Marketing and development.

3. The LCE will enroll in the four-course online Certification in Evangelism educational program at www.beadisciple.com (or its approved equivalent).

4. The LCE will assemble a Board of Directors or other appropriate governing body for his/her ministry.

5. The LCE will establish a 501(c)3 non-profit status.

6. The LCE will be an active ex-officio member of the Conference Board of Evangelism.

**Full Approval as Lay Conference Evangelist**

Provisional LCE’s must demonstrate the experience, gifts and ability in their ministry, and provide evidence of the fruitfulness. They must also show significant and successful progress towards the fulfillment of these Standards.

Not less than six months or more than three years following provisional approval, the LCE may formally request full approval as LCE through a written recommendation from his/her mentor to the Conference Board of Evangelism.

**Continuation as Lay Conference Evangelist**

1. LCE’s will be evaluated annually by the Conference Board of Evangelism and must continue to demonstrate the experience, gifts and ability in their ministry, and provide evidence of the fruitfulness. They must show significant and successful progress towards the fulfillment of these Standards.

2. Provide annually the following information to the Secretary of the Conference Board of Evangelism:

- A letter of recommendation from the Board of Directors.

- A written report of ministry engagement for the past year and vision for the future.

- Performance evaluations from any specific ministry activities.