

# Healing Minister

A Healing Minister is a lay person licensed to provide prayer for healing of body, mind and spirit. Christian healing is the manifestation of the creative power of God's love as God comes to make us a new creation in Jesus Christ. Christian healing involves restoring relationship with God as Creator, Jesus as Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit as Sustainer.

Rectors, Vicars, and Priests-in-Charge may appoint confirmed members in good standing from their congregations to be licensed Healing Ministers with the approval of the Bishop. Such Healing Ministers work under the close supervision of their clergy and may offer prayer in worship or in private visits, including the laying on of hands and anointing with consecrated oil.

*A Note about Anointing:* There is scriptural support for enabling lay people as well as clergy to perform anointing of the sick (see, for example, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 and James 5:14). The 1979 Book of Common Prayer provides that "In cases of necessity, a deacon or lay person may perform the anointing with oil blessed by a bishop or priest" (*BCP* p. 456). Because there may be differing theological understandings of what constitutes "necessity," the ultimate decision whether a lay person may perform anointing rests with the Rector, Vicar or Priest-in-Charge of the congregation. However, it is important to recognize that the Episcopal Church, acting through its 73rd General Convention, has approved materials authorizing lay persons with a gift of healing who work under the direction of the Clergy-in-Charge of a local congregation to "administer or assist in administering the laying on of hands and anointing." (*Enriching Our Worship 2: Ministry with the Sick or Dying Burial of a Child*, Supplemental Liturgical Materials prepared by The Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, Church Publishing Inc., 2000, p. 25).

## Discernment

Candidates considering the ministry of Healing Minister should confer with sponsoring clergy, spiritual directors, their Congregational Commission on Ministry, and other vocational guides to discuss honestly how to test a call.

*Discernment Questions for those discerning a call to this ministry:*

- Have I asked God whether God might be calling me to this ministry?
- How have I experienced God's grace in my life?
- What would I tell someone if asked, "What is important to know about God?"
- What is ministry and what are things that I do that are ministry?
- What does the Baptismal Covenant mean to me?
- Who are persons who have been most influential in my growth as a Christian and what did I learn from them?
- What is my experience of receiving healing prayer?
- How do I see the difference between healing and cure?

- Am I comfortable in the presence of those who may express strong emotions in association with their request for personal healing prayers?
- Am I able to keep and respect confidences?
- What gifts do I have that would be an asset for this ministry? What particular gifts do I bring now, and what gifts do I hope to develop/grow?
- What do I hope to help people understand or experience through my service as a Healing Minister?

## Expectations

*A confirmed adult communicant in good standing, prior to licensing, should be able to:*

1. Describe their sense of call to this ministry, orally and in writing to the Congregational Commission on Ministry.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the possibilities and limitations of Christian healing, including the difference between healing and cure.
3. Actively participate in congregational worship and have a personal prayer life.
4. Demonstrate competence in the following areas:
  - a. The *Book of Common Prayer*, especially the Creeds and An Outline of the Faith commonly called the Catechism.
  - b. The Gospels, particularly the stories of Jesus' healing miracles.
  - c. Traditions and styles of prayer.
  - d. Basic pastoral care skills such as reflective listening, respect for confidentiality, and the ability to empathize with others of different backgrounds.
  - e. Knowledge of when and how to report pastoral needs.
  - f. The practice of anointing and laying on of hands.
5. Complete all required Diocesan Safe Church Trainings. These trainings are available both through in person training events and online training programs. (*Refer to the Safer Church Trainings on the Diocesan website*). Trainings are good for five years.

Trainings required for this license:

- a. Standard Background Check: [Click here for more information](#)
- b. Prevention of Sexual Exploitation Training: [Click here of online training](#)
- c. Prevention of Sexual Harassment Training: [Click here for online training](#)
- d. Elder Abuse Awareness (Read online manual: "*A Citizen's Guide To Preventing & Reporting Elder Abuse*" found on the Safer Church section of Diocesan website) Click to access: [Preventing & Reporting Elder Abuse](#)

- e. Domestic Violence Awareness (Read online manual: “*Domestic Violence Awareness Manual, Diocese of Northern California*” found on the Safer Church section of Diocesan website) Click to access: [Domestic Violence Awareness Manual](#)
- f. Diocesan approved Anti-racism Training (*Contact the Office of the Bishop for upcoming trainings or the Diocesan Intercultural Ministries Commission to schedule a group training session.*)

## License Renewal

Licenses may be renewed by the Bishop for an additional three-year period. The supervising clergy person must send a letter on church letterhead to the Office of the Bishop certifying that:

1. The licensee has faithfully practiced his/her licensed ministry
2. The licensee participated in appropriate continuing education.
  - a. This education may include informal classes with supervising clergy, approved workshops or seminars, or suggested reading.
  - b. Formation and enrichment to strengthen ministers, such as retreats, quiet days, spiritual development activities, prayer workshops etc. at the discretion of supervising clergy.

## Training and Study Resources

### Online Resources

- Episcopal Healing Ministries. Accessed October 20, 2015. [www.episcopalhealing.org](http://www.episcopalhealing.org).
- The International Order of St. Luke the Physician. 2014. Accessed October 20, 2015. <https://orderofstluke.org/en/>.

### Books for Individual or Group Study

- Brooke, Avery. 1996. *Healing in the Landscape of Prayer*. Cambridge: Cowley Publications.
- Denton, Jean ed. 2005. *Good is the Flesh: Body, Soul, and Christian Faith*. Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing.
- Graves, Rev. Daniel F. (Compiler). 2010. *Prayers for Healing from the Anglican Tradition*. ABC Publishing
- MacNutt, Francis, Ph.D. rev. ed. 1974. *Healing*, Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press.
- Neal, Emily Gardiner. rev. ed. 2000. *The Reluctant Healer: One Woman's Journey of Faith*. Colorado Springs: Waterbrook Press.
- Nouwen, Henry J.M. 1972. *The Wounded Healer*. New York: Doubleday.

- Sanford, Agnes. 1947. *The Healing Light*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music. 2000. *Enriching Our Worship 2, Ministry with the Sick or Dying, Burial of a Child*. New York: Church Publishing.
- Wuellner, Flora Slosson. 1989. *Prayer, Fear, and Our Powers: Finding Our Healing, Release, and Growth in Christ*. Nashville: Upper Room Books.