

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2018  
ARCHIVES' RESEARCH REPORT**

**RESOLUTION NO.:** 2018-C040  
**TITLE:** Amend Canons Canon III.4.1(a)  
**PROPOSER:** West Missouri  
**TOPIC:** Canons

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**Directly Related:** (Attached)

2015-D002 Amend Canon III.4.1 and 4.2 [Of Licensed Ministries]  
1988-A123 Amend Canons III.3: Canon III.3 [Of Lay Eucharistic Ministers]  
1985-B004 Amend and Renumber Canons III.3: Canon III.3 [Of Lay Eucharistic Ministers]

**Indirectly Related:** (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

2000-C041 Amend Canon III.3.1(a) [Broadening Access to Lay Eucharistic Ministries]

*In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1976 through 2015, selecting “direct” resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The “direct” resolutions are attached and “indirect” resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives at 800-525-9329 before Convention or at Convention in the General Convention Secretariat.*

# C040 Amend Canon III.4.1(a)

Proposer	Diocese of West Missouri
Endorsed by	
Sponsored by	
Page numbers	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. 68, 69
HiA / Leg. Cttee	/
Current Status	Resolution Filed
Version	Original (as filed)
Review Status	Not yet reviewed

## RESOLUTION TEXT

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 79th General Convention amend Canon III.4.1(a) by removing the words “Eucharistic Minister” as follows:
- 2 Sec. 1 (a) A confirmed communicant in good standing or, in extraordinary circumstances, subject to guidelines established by the Bishop, a communicant in good standing, may be licensed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to serve as Pastoral Leader, Worship Leader, Preacher, ~~Eucharistic Minister~~, Eucharistic Visitor, Evangelist, or Catechist. Requirements and guidelines for the selection, training, continuing education, and deployment of such persons, and the duration of licenses shall be established by the Bishop in consultation with the Commission on Ministry.
- 3 And be it further
- 4 *Resolved*, That Canon III.4.6 be deleted and subsequent sections of Canon III.4 be renumbered accordingly.
- 5 ~~Sec. 6 A Eucharistic Minister is a lay person authorized to administer the Consecrated Elements at a Celebration of Holy Eucharist. A Eucharistic Minister should normally act under the direction of a Deacon, if any, or otherwise, the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.~~

## EXPLANATION

The effect of this resolution would be to remove the licensed ministry of Eucharistic Minister from the Canons of The Episcopal Church. This would not eliminate the ability of lay persons to assist in the administration of the sacrament, but will make it a local license. Thus, the Bishop would no longer be the person issuing licenses for Eucharistic Minister, saving much unnecessary paperwork.



**Resolution Number:** 2015-D002  
**Title:** Amend Canon III.4.1 and 4.2 [Of Licensed Ministries]  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Rejected  
**Final Text:**

Resolution Rejected. See Legislative History for original text of resolution.

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), p. 458.



**Resolution Number:** 1988-A123  
**Title:** Amend Canons III.2, 3 as follows: Canon III.2 [Of Lay Readers, Lay Preachers, and Catechists] Canon III.3 [Of Lay Eucharistic Ministers]  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred As Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That Canon III.2 and 3 be combined and amended as follows:*

**CANON 2 3.**

***Of Lay Readers, Lay Preachers, and Catechists Licensed Lay Persons***

**Sec. 1 (a).** ~~A confirmed adult communicant in good standing committed and prepared to may serve the Church as Lay Reader, Pastoral Leader, Lay Preacher, Lay Eucharistic Minister, or Catechist, may be if licensed to this ministry by the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which the person is canonically resident a member. Guidelines for training and selection of such persons shall be established by the Ordinary Bishop. of the Diocese and include provisions of Secs. 3-6 below, as applicable.~~

*(b). The Presiding Bishop or the Suffragan Bishop for the Armed Forces may license a member of the Armed Forces to exercise one or more of these ministries in the Armed Forces in accordance with the provisions of this Canon.*

**Sec. 2 (a).** ~~Such A license shall be given only at the request, and upon the recommendation, of the Member of the Clergy in charge of the Congregation in which the person will be serving. The license shall be issued for a period of time not to exceed three years and shall be revocable at any time by the Bishop, or by upon the request of the Member of the Clergy at whose request it was granted. in charge of the Congregation.~~

**(b).** ~~Renewal of the license shall be determined on the basis of the acceptable performance of the ministry by the licensee and upon the endorsement of the Member of the Clergy in charge of the Congregation in which the person is serving.~~

**(c).** ~~A person licensed in any Diocese under the provisions of this Canon may serve in another Congregation in the same or another Diocese at the invitation of the Member of the Clergy in charge, and with the consent of the Bishop in whose jurisdiction the service will occur.~~

**Sec. 3: (d).** ~~The person licensed In all matters relating to the conduct of the service, the sermons and the homilies to be read, and the dress or attire to be worn, a Lay Reader shall conform to the directions of the Bishop and the Member of the Clergy in charge of the Congregation in which the person is serving, and, in all matters relating to the conduct of services, the sermons to be read, and the dress to be worn. cases, to the directions of the Bishop. In every respect, the person licensed shall conform to the requirements and limitations set forth in the rubrics and other directions of the Book of Common Prayer. shall be conformed to. The Lay Reader shall not deliver sermons or addresses of his or her own composition unless licensed to do so under the provisions of Sec. 5 below.~~

*Sec. 3. A Pastoral Leader is a Lay Person licensed to exercise pastoral or administrative responsibility in a Congregation without a resident Member of the Clergy in charge and may be licensed to lead regularly the Offices authorized by the Book of Common Prayer. Prior to licensing, a Pastoral Leader shall be trained, examined, and found competent in the following subjects:*

~~Sec. 4. A Lay Reader, who is also assigned pastoral or administrative responsibility in a Congregation without a Member of the Clergy in charge, shall be trained, examined and found competent in the following subjects:~~

- (a). The Holy Scriptures, contents and background;
- (b). The Book of Common Prayer and The Hymnal;
- (c). The conduct of public worship;
- (d). Use of the voice;
- (e). Church History;
- (f). The Church's Doctrine as set forth in the Creeds and An Outline of the Faith, commonly called the Catechism;
- (g). Parish Administration;
- (h). Appropriate Canons;
- (i). Pastoral Care.

~~Such assignment shall not be made in a Congregation without a Member of the Clergy in charge which, A Pastoral Leader shall not be licensed if, in the judgment of the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority, the Congregation is able to and has had reasonable opportunity to secure one. a resident Member of the Clergy in charge.~~

*Sec. 4. A Lay Preacher is a person licensed to preach. Prior to licensing, the Lay Preacher shall be trained, examined, and found competent in the following subjects:*

- (a). The Holy Scriptures, contents and background;
- (b). The Book of Common Prayer and the Hymnal;
- (c). The conduct of public worship;
- (d). Use of the voice;
- (e). Church History;
- (f). Christian Ethics and Moral Theology;
- (g). The Church 's Doctrine as set forth in the Creeds and An Outline of the Faith, commonly called the Catechism;
- (h). Appropriate Canons;
- (i). Pastoral Care.

~~Sec. 5. A Lay Person deemed competent, whether or not licensed as a Lay Reader, may, after instruction and examination, be licensed by the Bishop to preach. Such license shall be granted under the same provisions as are set forth in Sec. 4 above. Persons so licensed shall only preach in congregations upon the invitation of the Member of the Clergy in charge.~~

~~Sec. 6. Lay Persons may also be licensed by the Bishop to serve as Catechists. Such persons shall be trained, examined and found competent in the following subjects.~~

- (a). The Holy Scriptures, contents and background;
- (b). The Book of Common Prayer and The Hymnal;
- (c). Church History;
- (d). The Church's Doctrine as set forth in the Creeds and An Outline of the Faith, commonly called the catechism;
- (e). Methods of Catechesis.

~~Such a license may be granted under the same provisions as are set forth in Sec. 2 above.~~  
~~Sec. 7.(a). A person licensed in any Diocese under the provisions of this Canon may serve in a Congregation of another jurisdiction at the invitation of the Member of the Clergy in charge, and with the consent of the Bishop thereof.~~

~~(b) .A person so licensed may serve in a unit of the Armed Forces with the permission of the Presiding Bishop or the Suffragan Bishop for the Armed Forces.~~

~~The Presiding Bishop or the said Suffragan Bishop for the Armed Forces may grant such license to a member of the Armed Forces for use therein, in accordance with the provisions of this Canon so far as they are applicable.~~

### ~~CANON 3. Of Lay Eucharistic Ministers~~

~~Sec. 1. 5(a). A Lay Eucharistic Minister is a confirmed adult communicant in good standing, committed and prepared to serve the Church as a Lay Eucharistic Minister, may be specially licensed to this extraordinary ministry. by the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which the person is canonically resident. The Lay Eucharistic Minister shall have one or both of the following functions, as specified in the license:~~

~~Sec. 2. Such special license shall be given only at the request, and upon the recommendation, of the Member of the Clergy in charge of the Congregation in which the Lay Eucharistic Minister will be serving. The license shall be issued for a period of time not to exceed three years and shall be revocable at any time by the Bishop, or by the Member of the Clergy at whose request it was granted.~~

~~Renewal of such special license shall be determined on the basis of the Lay Eucharistic Minister's acceptable performance of this ministry, and upon the endorsement of the Member of the Clergy in charge of the Congregation in which the person is serving.~~

~~Sec. 3. It is clearly understood that such ministry is not to take the place of the ministry of Priests and Deacons in the exercise of their office, and should normally be under the direction of a Deacon of the Congregation, if there be one. Persons so ministered to should also be visited regularly by the clergy of the parish.~~

~~Sec. 4. Qualifications, requirements, and guidelines for the selection, training and use of such Lay Eucharistic Ministers shall be established by the Ordinary of the Diocese, Provided, that the functions of the Lay Eucharistic Minister shall be limited to the following:~~

~~(1). (a). Administering the elements at any Celebration of Holy Eucharist in the absence of a if there is an sufficient number of Priests or Deacons assisting the celebrant; present.~~

~~(2). (b). Directly following a Celebration of the Holy Eucharist on Sunday or other Principal Celebrations, if so authorized by the Member of the Clergy in charge of the Congregation and especially licensed thereto by the Bishop, taking the Sacrament consecrated at the Celebration to those members of the Congregation who, by reason of illness or infirmity, were unable to be present at the Celebration.~~

~~(b). Qualifications, requirements, and guidelines for the selection, training, and use of Lay Eucharistic Ministers shall be established by the Bishop.~~

~~(c). Sec. 3. It is clearly understood that such This ministry is not to take the place of the ministry of Priests and Deacons in the exercise of their office, including regular visitation of members unable to attend the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist. A Lay Eucharistic Minister and should normally be under the direction of a Deacon of the Congregation, if there be one. Persons so ministered-to should also be visited regularly by the clergy of the parish.~~

*Sec. 6. A Catechist is a person licensed to prepare persons for Baptism, Confirmation, Reception, and the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows. Prior to licensing, Catechists shall be trained, examined and found competent in the following subjects:*

- (a). The Holy Scriptures, contents and background;*
- (b). The Book of Common Prayer and The Hymnal;*
- (c). Church History;*
- (d). The Church's Doctrine as set forth in the Creeds and An Outline of the Faith, commonly called the Catechism;*
- (e). Methods of Catechesis.*

*Sec. 7. A Lay Reader is a person who regularly leads public worship under the direction of a Member of the Clergy in charge of the Congregation. Training and licensing shall be under the authority of the Bishop upon the recommendation of the Member of the Clergy in charge of the Congregation, as provided by the Canons of the Diocese.*

*Sec. 8. A Lector is a person appointed without license by the Member of the Clergy in charge of the Congregation to read lessons or lead the Prayers of the People.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Detroit, 1988* (New York: General Convention, 1989), p. 239.



**Resolution Number:** 1985-B004  
**Title:** Amend and Renumber Canons III.3, 2 as follows: Canon III.3  
[Add Canon 3: Of Lay Eucharistic Ministers] Canon III.2.7  
[Repeal Sec. 7: Commission Reports to Bishop]  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred As Substituted and Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That Section 7 of Title III, Canon 2 be repealed in its entirety, and that any subsequent sections be renumbered accordingly; and be it further  
Resolved, That the following Canon be enacted as a new Canon 3 of Title III, and that the present Canon 3 of Title III and all subsequent Canons of Title III be renumbered accordingly:*

*Sec. 1. A confirmed adult communicant in good standing, committed and prepared to serve the Church as a Lay Eucharistic Minister, may be specially licensed to this extraordinary ministry by the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which the person is canonically resident.*

*Sec. 2. Such special license shall be given only at the request, and upon the recommendation, of the Member of the Clergy in charge of the Congregation in which the Lay Eucharistic Minister will be serving. The license shall be issued for a period of time not to exceed three years and shall be revocable at any time by the Bishop, or by the Member of the Clergy at whose request it was granted.*

*Renewal of such special license shall be determined on the basis of the Lay Eucharistic Minister's acceptable performance of this ministry, and upon the endorsement of the Member of the Clergy in charge of the Congregation in which the person is serving.*

*Sec. 3. It is clearly understood that such ministry is not to take the place of the ministry of Priests and Deacons in the exercise of their office, and should normally be under the direction of a Deacon of the Congregation, if there be one. Persons so ministered to should also be visited regularly by the clergy of the parish.*

*Sec. 4. Qualifications, requirements, and guidelines for the selection, training and use of such Lay Eucharistic Ministers shall be established by the Ordinary of the Diocese; Provided, that the functions of the Lay Eucharistic Minister shall be limited to the following:*

- (a). Administering the Cup at any Celebration of Holy Eucharist if there is an insufficient number of Priests or Deacons present.*
- (b). Directly following a Celebration of Holy Eucharist on Sunday or other Principal Celebrations, if so authorized by the Member of the Clergy in charge of the Congregation and especially licensed thereto by the Bishop, taking the Sacrament consecrated at the Celebration to those members of the congregation who, by reason of illness or infirmity, were unable to be present at the Celebration; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Standing Liturgical Commission be urged to develop an appropriate Liturgical Form for the distribution of the Elements of the Holy Eucharist under Title III. 26.4(b); and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Bishops of this Church be asked not to license this ministry until such Liturgical Forms are available.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 1985* (New York: General Convention, 1986), p. 278.