

Notes

1. The ACT Lay Preaching Co-ordinator is responsible for setting up the TLS Lite courses and for appointing suitable mentors/support partners in conjunction with the student.
2. There is a need for flexibility in the operation of this scheme in order to take account of a student's previous experience.
3. Local pastors and lay leaders would be encouraged but not required to take the TLS Lite courses.

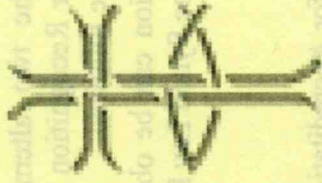
Assessment

- This will take place no less than a year after the start of training but will not happen until the student (taking advice from the mentor and support partner) feels ready
- It will take the form of an assessed service. The venue for this will not normally be the student's home church but another in the same Area
- There will be two assessors – one a suitable Elder from the church where the assessment is carried out, and one an experienced preacher (lay or ordained) from a different church (but not the student's home church)
- The TLS assessment form will be used
- The assessment will be arranged by the ACT Lay Preaching Co-ordinator

Recognition

- Once the assessed service has been completed successfully, the ACT Lay Preaching Co-ordinator will inform the Synod Lay Preaching Commissioner that all the requirements have been met
- The Synod Pastoral Committee will then concur and issue a certificate of Local Recognition to the ACT Lay Preaching Co-ordinator who will then arrange for this to be presented on a suitable occasion.

United Reformed Church Southern Synod



Lay Preaching

A guide for Churches

Introduction

As is common in much of the URc, churches in the Southern Synod are relying more and more on lay people to conduct worship each Sunday. Their contribution is becoming increasingly important and is very much valued.

All lay people who lead worship are encouraged to undertake some form of training in order to equip them for this very important calling.

This document outlines the two alternative routes that can be followed if Accreditation or Recognition is desired and sets out the steps that should normally be followed.

Further details or clarification can be obtained from the ACT Lay Preaching Co-ordinator or the Synod Lay Preaching Commissioner.

Testing the call

- A prospective candidate for Accreditation/Recognition approaches his/her minister or other appropriate person locally
- Church Meeting considers and affirms the calling (if not – it would go no further)
- Candidate meets with ACT Lay Preaching Co-ordinator to discuss the calling & options for training
- If the Assembly Accreditation route is the preferred option, the candidate will be referred to the Synod Lay Preaching Commissioner and/or Synod Development Officer who will take it from there
- If Synod Recognition is preferred, the ACT Lay Preaching Co-ordinator will initiate and oversee the training and inform Synod Lay Preaching Commissioner

Assembly Accreditation

The preferred route for Lay Preaching training is to take the excellent URc course, Training for Learning and Serving (TlS). This is a three year course run nationally with a fair amount of theoretical and practical work to be done. It involves local study, meeting fortnightly with a small group and a tutor, and four weekends away each year. Students are required to submit several pieces of written work each year and lead a service which will be assessed. Successful completion leads to Assembly Accreditation as a Lay Preacher. The initial contact for this is the Synod Development Officer

Local Recognition

Students will normally follow the programme set out below:

1. TlS Lite modules: Leading Worship, Preaching, the Bible, Theology
2. Synod Sacraments course (if student wishes to preside at Communion or baptism)
3. Gaining experience for at least a year, during this time working alongside a 'mentor' and a support partner
 - The mentor will be an experienced preacher (lay or ordained) who will act as a sounding board for ideas, involve the student in acts of worship they lead, give advice & make suggestions and generally give support & encouragement. If there were more than one student in the same area, it is possible that a group could be formed with the same mentor
 - The role of the support partner is to attend services led by the student (at least two during the year) to give feedback – members of the congregation to give feedback in the same way
 - It would be helpful if the mentor, support partner & student could meet together at the start of the year
 - Either the mentor or the support partner should be from a different church from the student