

UPCSA Mission & Discipleship Committee
The Order of Lay Ministries.

- **Celebrating** the abundance of God's gifts in the members of our congregations
- **Supporting** those who serve faithfully
- **Training** people towards excellence in service
- **Guiding** and clarifying processes and expectations

“WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?”

WE ARE ALL PART OF GOD'S CHURCH...

Ministers
 Worship Leaders
 Lay Preachers
 Pastoral Counsellors
 Assoc Chairpersons
 Youth Workers
 Pastoral Visitors
 Directors
 Choir

AND EACH OF US HAS A PART TO PLAY!

We are a *Gifted* Church!

We are blessed with dedicated and well-trained ministers who serve congregations in Word and Sacrament. We have faithful elders and stewards serving our Sessions and Boards. We also are blessed with many capable and talented members who serve their congregations either in part-time capacities or as volunteers, paid or unpaid.

While this volunteer ministry happens in various ways informally, the Mission and Discipleship Committee (M&D) felt that we should be much more deliberate and intentional about celebrating, supporting, training and guiding our members who get involved in supporting the work of the church.

The Order of Lay Ministries (OLM) has been put together to encourage deliberate, organised and well trained lay involvement in important ministries within the local congregations.

This, after all, is what the Priesthood of Believers is all about and this is how we develop **Missional Congregations** (which is one of the goals embraced by our General Assembly in 2012.)

The rest of this pamphlet will explain the name of the order, how it will work and what the implementation plan will be...



“WHAT'S IN THE NAME?”

Let's look at the name we have chosen.

It is an **Order**. This means there is recognition at Congregational and Presbytery level. To become part of of an order, one must fulfil the entrance requirements, be inducted into the order, observe the code of conduct and stay active in service. The order implies discipline, orderliness and training. It means that if I am a Youth Worker who is part of the order and I relocate to another Congregation, my being part of the order means that the congregation leaders immediately have a good reference to my competence, character and training.

It is a supportive order. This order does not replace the minister, elders or stewardship board. Members of this order have embraced a servant-heart, being willing to use their gifts and talents alongside and in support of existing office-bearers and structures.

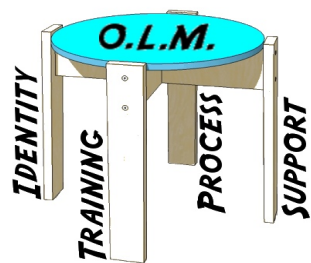
It is a **Lay** order. This means that people are not ordained but are able to serve as volunteers and in part time capacities. It means an accountant can serve as a worship-leader, a nurse can serve as an Association Chairperson, and a builder can serve as a youth leader. It also means that this order is not a shortcut or stepping stone toward ordained ministry.

It is about the **Ministries** and not the individual. The focus is not to give people positions or platforms, it is about fulfilling the Great Commission. It is always about service.

If your gift is **PROPHESYING** then **PROPHESEY** in accordance with your faith, if **servng** then **serve**, if **teaching** then **teach**, if it is to **encourage** then give **encouragement**, if **giving** then **give generously**, if it is to **LEAD** then do it **DILIGENTLY**, if it is to show **mercy** then do it **cheerfully**.

Romans 12:6-8

"HOW WILL THE ORDER WORK?"



There are four areas that the M&D Committee feels are important to put in place for the order to work. These are the four legs that our table stands on.

1. Identity

Everyone who wants to be part of the order will be required to complete a correspondence course entitled "An Introduction to the UPCSA." This foundation course will introduce candidates to the basics of the theology, ethos, structure and nature of our Denomination. We believe that this course will be a wonderful opportunity to get people "onto the same page" as far as our beliefs around servant-ministry, the priesthood of all believers, accountability and corporate decision-making and discernment are concerned. This will be particularly helpful for folk who haven't grown up as Presbyterians.

2. Process

Learning from feedback we have received, the committee has realised that many congregations are inadequately informed concerning labour law, advertising, interviewing and tax requirements for folk who are in their employ. The committee will draft procedures for congregations who would like to employ candidates and bring them into the OLM. These processes will protect congregations from difficulties down the road.

3. Training

The committee will seek useful training materials for Youth Pastors, Pastoral Counsellors, Worship Leaders, Leaders of Ministries and Associations and whatever other ministries may emerge. These courses will be promoted and encouraged so that people can grow their skills in their chosen areas

of ministry. We hope to gain access to materials and courses that are appropriate and affordable so that we can assist our members towards excellence in serving God in their local congregations.

4. Support

The committee will encourage support gatherings at Presbyteries and other platforms to come alongside those in the order. These gatherings will be for fellowship and inspiration.

A pilot to these kind of gatherings is being run by the committee in Sep 2015 at the Inspire Conference in Benoni. See www.upcsa-mad.org.za

We will also use our website to provide a place and space for people to share and learn.

"HOW DO CONGREGATIONS USE OLM?"

"We're a Congregation looking to Hire or Appoint someone with specific skills to help in a particular area. How do we do it?"

Here's the rough roadmap....

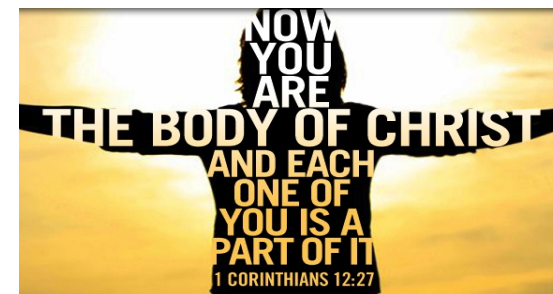
1. It starts with Session who will identify a ministry need and identify an appropriate candidate (they could consult the Directory of the Order to find candidates.) They will decide on the hours, expectations and remuneration (if any) for the position and draw up a "job description" and work parameters. They will establish reporting and accountability structures. They will interview the candidate.
2. The Session informs the Denomination's OLM Administrator who assists them with advice they may require. If the candidate is not a member of the order yet, you can invite them to join the order, but even if they don't you can still make use of the process tools (like draft contracts of appointment etc.) that the Order has made available.
3. If all the necessary steps are taken, the Presbytery Clerk is informed and the Presbytery makes arrangements to set the candidate apart to this ministry at one of its meetings. The candidate is put on the

Directory of the Order of Supportive Lay Ministries.

4. The candidate benefits from ongoing communication and support from the order.

"HOW CAN I JOIN THE ORDER?"

Find out as much as you can about the order by contacting the Administrator. Once you have a clear picture, you'll kick off the process with your session, who will contact the administrator of the order and also get the approval of your Presbytery. There are different requirements for different kinds of ministry, but once you have completed the requirements, your Presbytery will set you apart to the order.



"WHO IS THE CONTACT PERSON?"

Mrs. Eddie Stopforth 012 3330693 0827597396
eddiestop@global.co.za

CLOSING THOUGHTS...

As the committee has walked this road, we have been very aware that we were merely discovering what the Holy Spirit is already doing in the Church.

The Order of Supportive Lay Ministries allows us to celebrate, support and develop a force of congregation members who can be unleashed to carry out the Great Commission in our world.

We are very excited!!

Thank you for taking the time to read this brochure!

This pamphlet is produced as part of the work of the Mission and Discipleship Committee of the UPCSA. Please visit our website at www.upcsa-mad.org.za for more information.