



Licensing Lay Worship Leaders: The show must go on!

A request for support

prepared by Robyn Brown-Hewitt and Josie Baker on behalf of the Tatamagouche Centre

At a time of change and uncertainty in the United Church of Canada, the Licensed Lay Worship Leaders Atlantic program is a vital offering to build the resilience of the Church in Atlantic Canada and supporting the work of the church in rural areas. As membership declines in many Churches, it is a struggle to pay for Ministry Personnel to lead worship in small, rural, congregations. Often lay-people are called to fill the gap, frequently without training. There is an acute-need need for appropriate, United Church-trained pulpit supply for United Church congregations.

At this time, more than ever, lay people are needed to step into leadership roles within the church. The Licensed Lay Worship Leader Atlantic program involves transformative retreats which offer an experiential exploration of the liturgical year. Core to this work is the practice of proclamation as it relates to the congregational community – moving beyond their personal voice and towards the ways that God is present with the community in the act of worship. In a time when most human interaction takes place through a screen, and most popular “spiritual development” programs are individualistic, this program is needed, wanted, and transformational.

The Goals of the LLWL Program:

- To equip lay people with the ability and confidence to provide competent, knowledgeable support of congregations through worship leadership
- To ground lay leaders in the ethos, history and context of the United Church of Canada
- To build the engagement and vitality of lay people in congregations and presbyteries of the United Church in the Maritimes.
- To ensure that where there is a shortage of Ministry Personnel, there are Licensed Lay Worship Leaders serving their community.

The Seeds of Hope fund of the United Church Foundation recently turned down the Tatamagouche Centre’s request for funding for the Licensed Lay Worship Leaders program. **In order to continue to offer the LLWL program, the Tatamagouche Centre is seeking the following financial support to cover the costs of the leadership of the program:**

Cost for 1 full cycle of LLWL:

Expense	Cost per module:	Total cost for 5 modules:
Houraria for 3 leaders	\$1120	\$5600
Travel Expenses for Leaders	\$385	\$1925
Meals and Lodging for leaders	\$695	\$3475
Space Rental for Orientation session	\$150	\$150
Total	\$2350	\$11,150

Those enrolled in the program, with the help of their congregations, are asked to cover the costs of their meals, lodging, and course materials. This comes to \$250/weekend module.



Licensed Lay Worship Leaders in the Maritime Conference

In the LLWL Handbook, General Council specifies the suitability, personal qualities, and competencies expected of Licensed Lay Worship Leaders. The LLWL Program delivered at Tatamagouche Centre ensures that these requirements are met and exceeded. In order to encourage lay people willing to (or already engaged in) pulpit supply to become trained, and to ensure the quality of worship throughout the Maritime region(s), **we request that the Maritime Conference endorse the LLWL Program offered at the Tatamagouche Centre as the recommended program for the three Maritime provinces.**

Although symbolic, we believe that strong programs such as this can increase resilience and unity in these uncertain times.

Participant Testimonials

The LLWL Atlantic program creates a wonderful interactive experience, bringing together those of all ages and gifts who want to serve their congregations, in a leadership role. The lecturers bring the tools and support needed to give those of us the confidence to return and stand before our congregations. When I first attended this program, I had no idea what to expect. The weekend was busy, the learning interesting and the group came together as a family. The experience was uplifting, leaving me wanting to return and learn more. Anyone who feels the call to serve would benefit from the LLWL program.

Barbara B., LLWL Atlantic participant

The L.L.W.L. Atlantic program has made a significant impact on me and I therefore recommend this study block emphatically to anyone interested in ministry. ... We each received a thorough and helpful critique on a personal sermon we presented in a small group setting which proved to be a practical, constructive learning curve for all of us. In addition, we each prepared to take part in two local church services on Sunday which was also a very valuable experience. The professors and teachers conducting this program were excellent leaders and role models. ...Through this experience, I have definitely become better prepared in many ways to successfully conduct a church service and have grown in personal development, so I highly recommend this L.L.W.L. program.

Jane L. Keller, LLWL Atlantic participant

The LLWL Atlantic program has given me the resources and courage to succeed in my calling. The facilitators are amazing and keep the learning fun and interesting. ... If it were not for the LLWL program and the training I have received, I would never have the courage to continue on my journey of faith. I am hoping that in the not-to-distant future we are brought back for refresher courses and other training to help us in our worship planning and presentation. From the bottom of my heart, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to learn, strengthen my spirit and nurture my soul.

Bev Sharpe, LLWL Atlantic participant