

## What can I offer?

Spend time talking about how your team members' and congregations' gifts relate to the tasks that you will need to undertake on page 14.

*What tasks am I willing to take on?*

*What help, support or training would I need to do this?*

Pray for each other, finishing with 2 Peter 1:4-8

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# Becoming a Lay Ministry Team

Craig Mitchell

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We have made a decision to move towards being a congregation with a Lay Ministry Team. This has involved a great deal of questioning, praying, some dreaming, some heartache. People may still have some doubts, but we believe that at this time it's the best way for us to be God's people together in this place.

So what do we do now? How do we prepare ourselves for this move? How do we deal with the real grief that it part of losing our minister? How do we begin to take this new step together?

Some of us have been called by God and our congregation to be part of the new Lay Ministry Team. We're not sure what this is going to mean. Some of us are wondering if we did the right thing by agreeing to do it.

We believe that God is with us in the midst of this change. Together we will seek God's guidance and ask for God's strength to learn how we can be the church in this time.

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This booklet is designed to help you begin to work together at being a Lay Ministry Team.

## 1. Becoming a Lay Ministry Team

This booklet will be useful to work through with your minister as you prepare to become a Lay Ministry Team.

## 2. Beginning as a Lay Ministry Team

This booklet will help you in the first weeks and months of being a Lay Ministry Team after your minister has left.

## 3. Being a Lay Ministry Team

This booklet will help you once you have moved past the initial 'settling in' time of being a Lay Ministry Team.

John: I guess I do. It's one thing to pray by myself at home, but it's another thing to lead the whole congregation.

Joan: Well, I really appreciated your prayer. It helped me to focus on God and to think about people in need.

John: Thanks. I've been feeling like I don't have much to offer this team.

Joan: Like you're not making much of a contribution?

John: Exactly. Are you saying I'm not making a contribution?

Joan: Not at all, it's just that we're all feeling the same way. I'm glad you're part of the team. You have some great ideas about outreach,

John: Do you think so?

Joan: Sure. May be the prayer stuff takes time. I'd be happy to work with you next time you have to write a prayer.

John: Thanks, that would be great.

## Practice some Active Listening

Be a mirror to the other person

### 1. Reflect their feelings

*"You sound angry about that."*

*"You seem to be feeling hurt and upset."*

### 2. Reflect the information

Summarise what they are saying.

*"So you're finding it hard to start a conversation when you visit people in hospital?"*

*"You're worried that people are still upset about us losing our minister."*

### 3. Ask direct questions

*"Are you saying that you feel our team isn't working well?"*

*"What was it about the meeting that upset you?"*

### 4. Avoid making judgements or taking over the subject

# Team Skills: Active Listening

Active Listening one of the most important team skills. It means

1. Really hearing what others are saying.
2. Checking that you have heard accurately .
3. Giving some helpful feedback.

Read the following two role plays. Talk about what behaviour was helpful and unhelpful in each case.

## SCENE 1

John: That worship service yesterday was awful! I feel so disappointed with myself.

Joan: I agree. I wish we had Reverend Smith back with us. He really knew how to preach. And he certainly picked better hymns.

John: Yes, I suppose he did. All those years of training must make a difference.

Joan: I'm thinking of doing a training course, one of those correspondence courses. I'd like to learn book-keeping.

John: I don't feel like I've got much to offer this team.

Joan: I think the closing date for that course is next week. (looks at watch) Look at the time! I really need to get home before the roast burns. Cheer up, John. You're always so gloomy. (rushes off)

John: Perhaps I should resign. No-one seems to appreciate me.

## SCENE 2

John: That worship service yesterday was awful! I feel so disappointed with myself.

Joan: You sound upset with yourself.

John: I sure am. I never realised that writing a prayer was so hard. Rev. Smith always made it sound so easy.

18 Joan: You wish you could write them like he did.

*These workbooks contain some team-building exercises as well as some guidance for working and planning together. They can be used as part of your regular team meetings. You can decide how often you choose to do the activities in the booklets.*

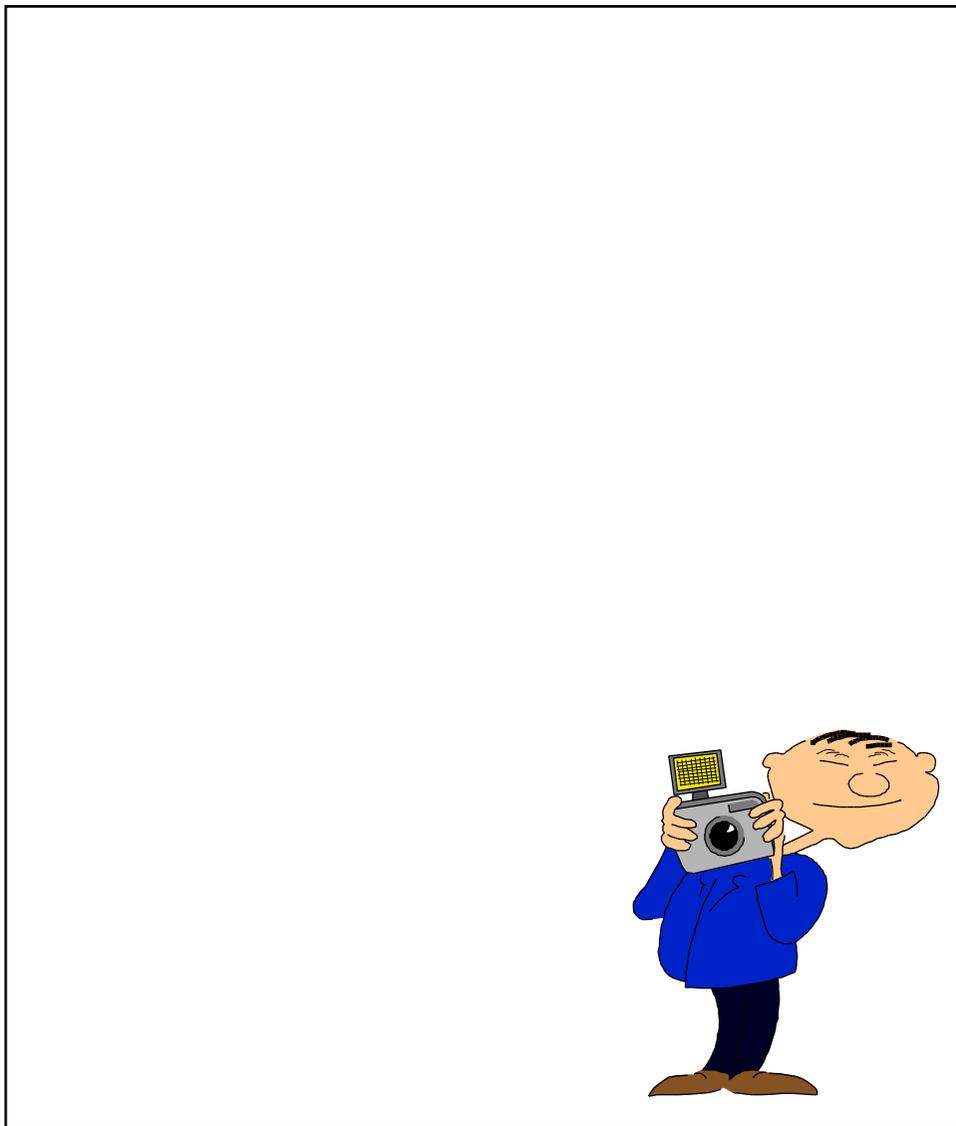
## What is a Lay Ministry Team?

- v A group of people called by God through their congregation
- v People called to exercise leadership in their congregation
- v People who have a genuine faith in Jesus Christ
- v People who bring unique gifts and experiences
- v People who are committed to working together to serve God
- v People who have hopes and doubts about the future
- v People who are willing to plan and pray together
- v People who are willing to learn and to try new things
- v People who know they can't do everything by themselves
- v People who are prepared to laugh, sweat and cry together
- v People who depend upon the other members of the congregation
- v People who have a range of other commitments in their lives
- v People who are concerned about the future of the community in which they live
- v People who trust in God's presence and guidance

*Which of the above statements are true for you and your Team?*

## Who is in our Lay Ministry Team?

Write down the names of your team members on this page, spacing out the names down the left side of the page. Later we will be thinking about what kind of team we make together.



A large empty rectangular box for writing names, with a cartoon character holding a camera at the bottom right corner.



## Working as a Team

Here are some key aspects of working well as a team:

### Common Purpose

We need to agree on what we are here to do.

### Commitment to Working Together

Every person needs to be committed to working with and supporting the other members of the team.

### Willingness to Listen

Every person needs to count the opinions and feelings of others as being just as important as their own.

### Willingness to Encourage

Every person needs to offer positive encouragement to every other team member.

### Willingness to Give and Receive Helpful Feedback

Every person needs to be willing to offer and receive constructive help from others.

### Willingness to Grow in Faith

Every person needs to be willing to share in prayer, sharing and study together and to explore Christian faith.

### Willingness to Work Through Conflict

Every person needs to be willing to sort through times of difference and disagreement.

### Willingness to Take Responsibility

Every person needs to be prepared to do the agree jobs and be accountable to the group.

### Willingness to Take Risks

Every person needs to be prepared to step outside their 'comfort' zone and try something new for the sake of the team.

*Which of these will you find easiest?*

*Which of these will you find hardest?*

## Affirming Each Other

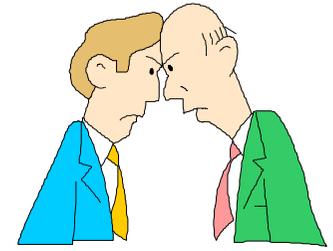
Turn back to page 4. Next to the name of each person, write down one strengths that you have discovered in them during your time together so far.

In the group, take time to give each other this positive feedback. In the space below, write down what others say about you.

What do I bring to the team?

## What is a team?

Write down some words that come to mind when you think of the word "team"?



## What makes a good team?

Think of a good team experience that you have had. What helped to make it a good experience? Add other people's ideas.

## What prevents people becoming a good team?

Write down some things that stop people working together well.

## Why are we here?

What are you being called to do as a team?  
What do you hope to achieve as a team?



## What are our gifts?

Here is a list of gifts and talents. You can add others to the list if you like. Write down the names of people in your team and congregation next to the gifts you see in them. Don't just think about what people already do, but think also about people's potential to do something new.

**Encouragement**  
**Pastoral care**  
**Teaching**  
**Preaching**  
**Evangelism**  
**Giving**  
**Administration**  
**Healing**  
**Helping**  
**Serving**  
**Hospitality**  
**Leadership**  
**Discernment**  
**Prophecy**  
**Faith**  
**Music**  
**Caring**  
**Finance**

## What needs to be done?



Make a list of things that the Lay Ministry Team and others might need to do. e.g. home visiting, preparing worship, funerals, etc.  
Think about your church's groups and programs; property and finance; the needs of different age groups; people in your community; communication.

## What do I bring to this team?

I am a person of faith

*I can share my faith with others*

*I need my faith to be nurtured and strengthened*

***We will share our faith and encourage each other's faith***



What have been some important times or experiences in your Christian faith?

How would you like this team to express and share faith together?

I am a person with gifts

*I can share my gifts with others*

*I need my gifts to be encouraged and developed*

***We will share our gifts and encourage each other's gifts***



What are some gifts and talents that you bring to this group?

How could this team encourage people to use and develop their gifts?

I am a person who listens

*I can listen to and accept the contributions of others*

*I need to learn from what others have to say*

***We will listen to others and respect each person's contribution***

What will you need to do in order to listen well to others?

How can the group make sure that people are listened to?



I am a person who cares

*I can show care and concern for others*

*I need to learn about care by practising care for others*

***We will risk caring for each other and accepting each other***

What are some ways that you can show care for others in the group?

How can the group remind its members to be caring for one another?



What are we hoping for?

What will your church and community be like if the move to a Lay Ministry Team works well?

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for writing answers to the questions above.

## Preparing for the change

*What feelings and reactions do people have to the loss of a minister and the move to a Lay Ministry Team?*

*What help and support do people in the church and community need to sort this through?*

*What can we do as a team to help people work through their grief and get ready to move on?*

I am a person with needs

*I can share my hopes, memories, hurts, doubts and fears*

*I need to be loved and accepted for who I am*

**We will risk sharing our hurts and forgiving one another**

What are some of the questions and doubts I have about belonging to this team?

As a group, how can we encourage each other to be open and share our needs?



I am a unique person.  
I bring something to this group  
that no-one else can bring.

Read Romans 12:1-8.

## Moving to a new future

It has been suggested that the kinds of changes that our churches will go through are like the journey of the people of Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land.

### EGYPT - Leaving the familiar place

We will have to leave our familiar ways of being the church and move to a new way of being the people of God. Leaving the old ways will be hard, and we will probably wish that we could go back again. But God calls us to move on, to hope and to dream.

*What things about the present will you be sorry to leave?  
What things about the present will you be glad to leave?*

### DESERT - Travelling in the Wilderness

Before we arrive at the new place, the new way of being the church, we will have to travel through the desert together. The first weeks and months of being a Lay Ministry Team will be a real challenge. This will be a difficult time, a time of testing and struggle. It is also a time when we can discover God in a new way. We will need to listen carefully for God's guidance.

*What will be hardest about the first weeks in the wilderness?  
What will help to keep you going through the wilderness?*

### PROMISED LAND - Arriving in a new place

We are called forward by the promise that God will take us to a new place of blessing. This doesn't mean a cosy, trouble-free future. This promised land will have its own adventures and challenges. But it will be a time when we can enjoy the fruit of our hard work and see God working in our lives and in our community.

*What are you hoping for down the track?  
How will you know when you have 'arrived'?*

## What is our present situation?

What are the main issues facing our church and community at this time?

