

Lay Leadership Institute

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS)

Who is the Lay Leadership Institute for?

The South Dakota District Lay Leadership Institute is designed to help all laypeople, both men and women, deepen their knowledge of God's Word and Christian doctrine and to train and equip laypeople for greater service within their congregation. Levels 1 and 2 of the LLI program are open to laymen and laywomen. Level 3 of LLI is reserved for laymen who are preparing to assist their pastor in his ministry or considering entering ordained ministry.

How are Lay Leadership Institute courses conducted?

Each Lay Leadership Institute course has a minimum of two face-to-face meetings with the instructor, one at the beginning of the course and another at the end of the course. The course instructor may wish to schedule more face-to-face meetings with the course participants. These face-to-face meetings typically meet at Faith Lutheran Church, Pierre, SD, although other locations which would be central to all course participants may be used. In the time between the face-to-face meetings, course work is completed and submitted to the instructor through e-mail correspondence. Courses are 12-15 weeks long and the amount of time needed per week to complete course work varies by course and instructor.

What is the difference between the 3 levels of the Lay Leadership Institute?

The three different levels of involvement in the Lay Leadership Institute reflect the amount of assistance a layperson will provide to their pastor after completing the Lay Leadership Institute courses and the consent of the congregation to utilize the layperson to assist the pastor in his ministry. The three levels of the Lay Leadership Institute are:

Level 1: This level is for the individual who wishes to take a course for their own, personal enrichment. They are simply seeking to deepen and broaden their own knowledge and understanding of God's Word and Christian doctrine. Level 1 participants pay the course fee and complete all required course work. With the satisfactory completion of each course, the individual will receive a Certificate of Completion.

Level 2: This level is designed for those laypeople, both men and women, whose congregations desire to use them to serve within various ministries of the church. Examples of ministry areas that Level 2 participants may wish to be trained and equipped for: evangelism, outreach, youth leader, Sunday school director/teacher, confirmation instructor, parish music, etc. With a Level 2 participant, the congregation has indicated, in some official capacity and with the consent of the pastor, that they intend to utilize the person in the ministry area for which they have been trained. Level 2 participants pay the course fee and complete all required course work. With the satisfactory completion of each course, the individual will receive a Certificate of Completion.

Level 3: This level is designed for laymen who wish to receive training so that they may offer the greatest amount of assistance to the pastor in his ministry (visit the shut-in or hospitalized, lead a worship service, deliver a sermon when the pastor is unavailable). This assistance would not involve the administration of the sacraments or the officiating of weddings. All assistance would be under the direct supervision of the pastor. With a

Level 3 participant, the congregation has indicated, in some official capacity and with the consent of the pastor, that they intend to utilize the person as an “assistant to the pastor” after the layman has successfully completed all of the courses in the Lay Leadership Institute. For those wishing to enter the Lay Leadership Institute program at Level 3, the District has created a formal application and annual review process. More information about this process will be provided at the time of application for Level 3 participation. Level 3 is also intended for those laymen interested in pursuing ordained ministry either through the Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) program or through residential seminary training. Level 3 participants pay the course fee and complete all required course work. With the satisfactory completion of each course, the individual will receive a Certificate of Completion and, having completed all of the courses in the Lay Leadership Institute, will receive a second certificate recognizing their completion of the Lay Leadership Institute program.

What is the cost for a Lay Leadership Institute course and does my congregation share in the cost?

The cost for a Lay Leadership Institute course is \$150. \$50 of this is a non-refundable deposit. The remaining \$100 may be refunded to the individual up to four weeks from the first class meeting. After four weeks from the first class meeting, no refund of the registration fee will be given to the participant. Travel expenses (gas, meals, lodging) will be the responsibility of the participant. The congregation may, but is not obligated to, provide financial assistance for a Level 1 participant. Because a congregation does intend to utilize the services of a participant in Levels 2 or 3, the congregation is expected to provide some level of financial support for the participant.

Do I have to take all 11 Lay Leadership Institute courses?

A layperson in the Lay Leadership Institute participating at a Level 1 or 2 is not required to take all 11 courses. At Level 1, an individual is free to participate in only those courses which interest them. At Level 2, an individual need only participate in those courses which would help to train and equip them for the ministry area in which they will be used. At Level 3, an individual is required to complete all 11 courses, unless the layman enrolls in an ordained ministry program such as the Specific Ministry Pastor program or enters residential seminary training.

What is the role of my pastor when I participate in a Lay Leadership Institute course?

The primary point of contact for the participant in a Lay Leadership Institute course will be the instructor of the course. The participant’s pastor, however, will be a resource that the participant can look to for help and guidance with course work and questions. The pastor will be more involved and have a greater role in working with and supervising those participating at Level 2 and 3. Because the role of the congregation and pastor are more intentional at Level 2 and 3, those individuals who wish to participate at Level 2 and 3 should seek their congregation’s and pastor’s approval before applying for that level.