

Methodist Lay Preachers' Network Newsletter

February 2026

Tēnā koutou katoa, malo e lelei, talofa lava, ni sa bula vinaka,
greetings from the Methodist Lay Preachers Network.

In this newsletter you will find:

- information about *Lead Worship*
- Diagram outlining process for becoming a Lay Preacher
- Local recognition discussion
- NZLPA and Methodist LP Network overlap
- names of Methodist Network Synod reps – and vacancies!
- Details of next Network General Meeting by zoom

Lead Worship 1 and 2

Lead Worship 1 and *2* continue to be available to teach basic lay preaching skills, biblical background and theology. It is particularly suited to those exploring a call to lay preaching and those already beginning to lead worship who wish to extend their skill base.

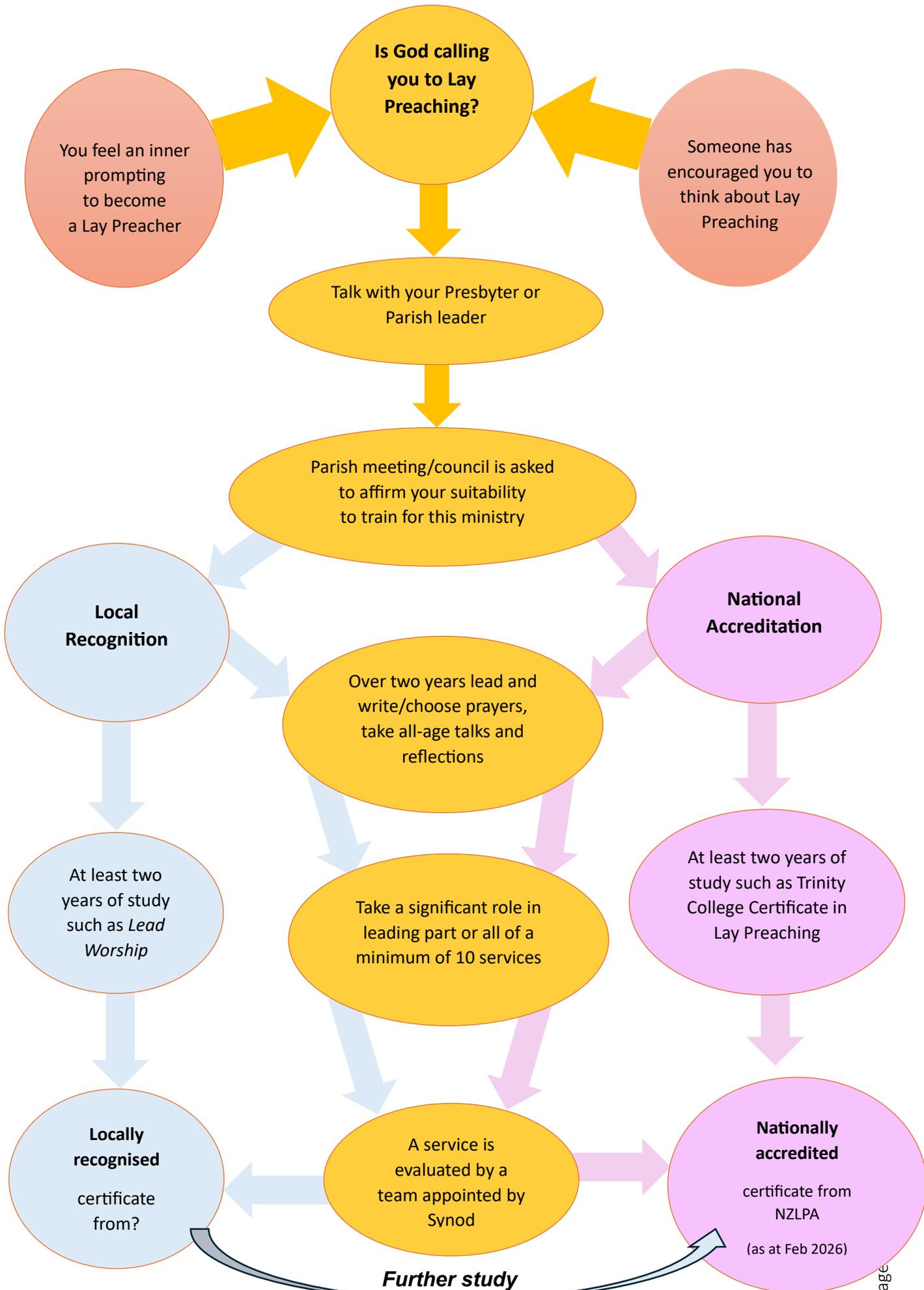
We are running *Lead Worship 1* as monthly zoom sessions on the 4th Wednesday of each month from 25 February to 25 November 2026 from 7.30 – 8.45pm. These teaching sessions are enhanced by linking each participant with a mentor and by encouraging participants to create a portfolio to accompany learning and so build a resource for ongoing use. Each session has material to read ahead of time, which will be sent out a week or two beforehand. Ngaire or Viv (contact details below) look forward to receiving registrations from those interested so that we can connect you with a suitable mentor, pass on the zoom link and circulate the background reading.

Wednesday, 25 February	Introduction
Wednesday 25 March	Profile of a Worship Leader
Wednesday, 22 April	Resources of the Church Year
Wednesday, 27 May	Music in Worship
Wednesday, 24 June	The Language of public worship
Wednesday, 22 July	Prayer in public worship
Wednesday, 26 August	Culture and worship
Wednesday, 23 September	Growing in faith
Wednesday, 28 October	Creativity in worship
Wednesday, 25 November	Theology in worship

Please also contact us even if you would just like to know more, or if a local presbyter or experienced accredited Lay Preacher is interested in running a face-to-face course locally.
Viv Whimster vjwhimster@gmail.com, 07 578 6056, 021 137 2349 or
Ngaire Southon ngaire@southon.net, 07 578 7119, 021 0224 5165

Satisfactory completion of the course is measured by attending the sessions, meeting monthly with a mentor and gathering reflections on the course and relevant resources into a portfolio. One group has started at Rangiora-Woodend – please get in touch with Margaret (email: w.acmd.50@gmail.com) to register.

Process for Lay Preaching



For those interested in national accreditation or further study, we recommend taking Trinity College papers for the Certificate in Lay Preaching and completing the accreditation process outlined in Information Leaflet #153.

<https://www.methodist.org.nz/tangata/information-leaflets/153-lay-candidates/>

Local recognition discussion

Many English-speaking Parishes are short of preachers and worship leaders so they enlist the help of anyone willing and able to fill these roles. Not all these people feel a call to become accredited Lay Preachers, and while some have little or no official training, many have been doing these tasks well for a long time and already come with plenty of skills. We acknowledge the ministry of these people who are affirmed by their Parishes and include them as “locally recognised” (L/R). We have been encouraged that several Update forms have been returned using this category.

We are still exploring what this means and welcome your feedback on these points:

- what basic training (if any) should be expected in terms of study, mentoring, practice and evaluation?
- should we formalise this recognition and if so, how?
- if a certificate is issued, should it be through the Network or through the NZLPA on the recommendation from the Parish?

NZLPA and Methodist LP Network overlap

Which brings us to the continuing question of the amalgamation of the New Zealand Lay Preachers Association (NZLPA) and Methodist LP Networks.

- The NZLPA is the inter-denominational organisation which was formed from the Methodist Lay Preachers Association (MLPA) to reflect the partnerships in UCANZ.
- Funds and the authority to issue accreditation and long-service certificates at the direction of the appropriate denomination were passed from the MLPA to the NZLPA.
- Lay Preaching is a strong thread of ministry for Methodists who soon realised that we needed a group within this denomination to address issues such as training and on-going education – hence the formation of the Methodist LP Network.
- The NZLPA Executive and membership are predominantly Methodist, though hard work has been done to try to broaden representation to other denominations.
- How could the two groups become stream-lined? We would particularly value hearing from Presbyterians and those in Co-operating or Union Parishes.
- What would we lose if either group ceased to exist? At present the NZLPA issues accreditation and long-service certificates; the Network maintains the Methodist database, offers guidance on training and runs the basic *Lead Worship* course.
- How would these groups work best for YOU?

Touchstone writers

The Network has been invited to contribute articles to Touchstone. Would you be interested in sharing the story of how your daily life impacts your preaching, or how you sensed God’s call and embarked on your Lay Preaching journey? Please let Viv know if you are interested in contributing.

Names of Methodist Network Synod reps – and vacancies!

Methodist Synod Network Reps at present are:

Northland, Auckland, Manukau – Rosalie Gwilliam, Peter Lane
Waikato-Wairiki - Ngaire Southon, Seluvaia Pouono
Lower North Island - Rosalie Sugrue, Maureen Calhaem
South Island - Margaret Woodcock
Sinoti Samoa - Rev Sioa Letalu
Vahefonua Tonga - TBA
Wasewase - TBA

We would love to find more people to join us on the Network!

Ideally, from the South Island and lower North Island. Can you recommend anyone?

We would like the Network team to be a better reflection of the diversity among our many active Lay Preachers in Methodist Parishes and are grateful to Seluvaia Pouono for her interest in joining us.

Methodist LP Network Zoom General Meeting

Please join us for a discussion on Lay Preacher issues on

Monday 9 March at 7.30pm – Methodist Lay Preachers Network is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Methodist Lay Preachers Network's General Zoom Meeting

Time: Mar 9, 2026 07:30 PM Auckland, Wellington

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85021934261?pwd=BXowkbgCE0G6P9JYK8CWI42ab0DAGQ.1>

Meeting ID: 850 2193 4261

Passcode: 200895

Convenor Viv Whimster

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Co-convenor Ngaire Southon

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