

There is still some confusion about the Lay Speaking Ministry Program in the Central District. I will attempt to clarify some of the major points.

- The first step in the Lay Speaking Ministry Program is to complete the Basic Lay Speakers program. Upon completion, you will be able to speak in your local church for three years. You may attend this course again with a different instructor if you do not wish to take the Advanced Course. Basic Lay Speaking Courses are available across the Conference.
- During the three year period, you will have opportunities to attend an Advanced Lay Speakers Program. Upon completion of this program, you will be allowed to speak anywhere within the Iowa Annual Conference. This program also is effective for three years.
- Speaking in your local church or anywhere else is strictly voluntary. You are not required to speak at any time. Some people take these courses just to continue their faith journey. It is somewhat similar to the School for Lay Ministry. In order to maintain your standing as a Basic or Advanced Lay Speaker, you must be recertified every three years.
- There are approximately 10 advanced courses you may select from and many are offered all across the state. You must renew your certification every three years.
- Once you have completed the Advanced Course of Lay Speaking, there are several options available to recertify yourself. Many courses are available for recertification such as: another course of Advanced Lay Speaking &
 - Academy of Spiritual Formation
 - Camp Training
 - Chrysalis Training
 - Discipleship Leadership Training
 - Lay Witness Mission
 - UMW School of Mission
 - School for Lay Ministry
 - Spiritual Workshop
 - Stephens Ministry
 - Walk to Emmaus
- If you are a graduate of the School of Lay Ministry, this does not automatically certify you as a Lay Speaker. You must have been certified as an Advanced Lay Speaker prior to your graduation. Then your graduation will count as recertification.
- Charge Conference Form F is the only form that applies to Basic or Advanced Lay Speakers. The Form has been simplified this year and should be easier to understand. You need only list the last qualifying event to maintain your certification. The Form must be filled out correctly and signed by yourself and dated, it must have your Pastor's signature or the Chair of your SPRC Committee. It must be signed by the presiding Elder or District Superintendent during the Church Charge Conference. It must then be submitted to the District Office. The District Office will then send a copy of each Form F to the Committee on Lay Speaking.
- There is also an annual report that must be filed by the Advanced Lay Speaker, which must be attached at the time of the Church Charge Conference.
- The Central District attempts to have to Basic and Advanced Lay Speakers training sessions twice each year, so visit the new Lay Speaking page on the Central District part of the Conference web site.

If you have questions regarding the program, please contact me or the Central District Office. We'll be happy to help you navigate the process.

Daryl Barnard
Director of Lay Speaking Ministry for the Central District