



The Church of England
in Essex and East London
Diocese of Chelmsford

Healing and Deliverance Ministry

Guidance for clergy

‘In union with their fellow servants in Christ, may they reconcile what is divided, heal what is wounded and restore what is lost. May they declare your blessings to your people; may they proclaim Christ’s victory over the powers of darkness, and absolve in Christ’s name those who turn to him in faith;’

Common Worship: The Ordination of Priests, The Ordination Prayer

The Ministry of Healing – Calling upon

All Christians pray for God’s blessing upon this world. It is right that they should pray for God’s healing with people who have asked for prayer in the name of the risen Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit. All are called to proclaim Christ’s victory over the powers of darkness for all eternity.

‘having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.’

Colossians 2:15

Priests are ordained to bless in the name of Christ and with the authority of the Church. It is right that they should not only pray for God’s healing with people who have asked for prayer in the name of the risen Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit, but also anoint them, bless them and absolve them in the name of Christ. It is also right that they should bless places in Christ’s name and dedicate objects for God’s praise and glory.

The Ministry of Healing is calling God’s blessing and healing power upon people, and into situations and places.

Jesus and the apostles heal with a word or a simple touch. It is always a gentle and generous action.

“Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong.

Acts 3:6

The Ministry of Deliverance – Assessment

If you are contacted by someone asking for the Ministry of Deliverance because of paranormal activity, you should in the first instance refer this to the Diocesan Deliverance Team (deliverance@chelmsford.anglican.org)

How to assess

- Pray before you visit, for the person and for the situation.
- Bring love and reassurance
- Listen attentively, pastorally and sensitively.
- hear what people actually say – remember that what they are saying is true for them, however strange it may sound to you - do not impose your own conclusions on the one hand nor collude with what is being said on the other.
- Take a careful and full history,

In particular try to find out

- What exactly people say has been happening?
- What evidence is there for this?
- When did the phenomena first start?
- Do the time and date have any significance (is it an anniversary etc) ?
- What seems to have triggered off the phenomena?
- Where did the phenomena occur?
- Is there any evidence history of previous disturbances on the same site? Be aware of any contextual and cultural issues and 'local superstitions'
- Did the previous occupants experience the same trouble?
- Who are the witnesses and do they seem reliable?
- Who else is in the house, and their ages – have other people had the same experiences?
- Does the evidence seem to agree?
- What else has been going on in the person's life at this time, (bereavement, relationship difficulties, money or employment issues etc)
- Note any medical history and use of medication.
- Reassure the person that you are taking what they have told you seriously, and that you will consult with an advisor and get in touch again at a date and time that is mutually agreed.
- Always look for a natural or psychological explanation
- Finally: offer prayers, including the Lord's Prayer.

(adapted from Dominic Walker – the Ministry of Deliverance 1997 London DLT)

What happens next

If you are concerned that there might be evidence of paranormal activity, you should not attempt the Ministry of Deliverance yourself, instead you should contact the Diocesan Ministry of Deliverance Team. It is best to do this by email

You, as the minister, will always remain the primary contact with the client(s). The Ministry of Deliverance Team will advise how to continue according to Church of England guidelines. They will not take over your pastoral responsibilities as parish priest or chaplain. After the issue has been resolved, you are encouraged to keep in contact with the client(s)

The Ministry of Deliverance – Calling out

The Ministry of Deliverance is calling demonic powers from a person or a place. It is often called exorcism. In the Church of England this ministry is strictly reserved to Bishops and those to whom the Bishop gives special authority in particular circumstances.

Please read the **Church of England guidelines for Good Practice in the Deliverance Ministry** at the end of this document. (Appendix 2)

Jesus and the apostles deliver people from demonic powers with a simple command

Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a female slave who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling. She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, 'These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved.' She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so annoyed that he turned round and said to the spirit, 'In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!' At that moment the spirit left her.

Acts 16:16-18

Safeguarding, Conversion Therapy, the Law

Children and young people under the age of 18

Formal rites of deliverance, including those involving touch, must not be carried out on any person under 16 years of age without parental consent, which must be confirmed in writing.

In the majority of cases involving young people aged 16 and 17, they are able to give consent in their own right, but issues of age and consent should always be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. In other words, it is a judgement call and the medical professional will need to make an individual assessment of the competence and understanding of the young person at the time.

In addition, with 16-17 year old children consideration should still be given to whether or not the parents should be informed and the decision documented. In all cases, the rite must have been authorised by the bishop after consultation with the DSA and a medical professional.

Conversion Therapy

For the avoidance of any doubt, and in line with the decision of the General Synod of the Church of England in July 2017, it is made clear that nobody, whether a member of a Diocesan Deliverance Ministry Team or otherwise, is permitted to use any form of deliverance ministry in pursuit of changing or influencing somebody's sexual orientation.

This applies whether or not the individual concerned wishes to receive such ministry.

Individuals asking for such ministry must be treated with compassion and understanding, and should be referred both to pastoral support and to links to appropriate resources.

Consent

Ministry in times of Deepest Need

5.3 The clergy should be aware of and respect the boundaries between the ministry of healing and the deliverance ministry. People have a right to know what is being provided and how they will be ministered to: no one should be ministered to against their will.

Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy

- All reasonable steps should be taken by those involved to ensure their awareness of current law as it applies to this ministry, e.g. data protection, informed consent. Legal liability issues must be considered from an insurance viewpoint
- Physical touch is a problem for some people. Permission from the person should always be sought before the laying on of hands or anointing with oil or any other physical contact.
- Laying on of hands should be limited to the head and shoulders.

Please read the **The Church of England House of Bishops' guidelines for good practice in the healing ministry** at the end of this document (Appendix 1)

DataProtection

Confidential records should be kept by those carrying out deliverance ministry to protect both those to whom they minister and those who are ministering, within the constraints of the Data Protection Act. Any limitations to confidentiality should be explained in advance and any disclosure should be restricted to relevant information, which should be conveyed only to appropriate persons, normally with consent and again, within the constraints of the Data Protection Act.

Insurance

The Ministry of Deliverance is not considered a normal parish activity for insurance purposes. Clergy are not covered by their insurance for the Ministry of Deliverance should a legal case arise.

Appendix 1

House of Bishops Guidelines for Healing Ministry

The Church of England House of Bishops' guidelines for good practice in the healing ministry

The healing ministry is Jesus' ministry entrusted to us, always to be exercised with reverence, love and compassion. The guiding principle is to recognize the presence of God in those receiving this ministry and honour his presence in them.

1. Prayer and preparation.

The healing ministry is based on prayer in the name of Jesus Christ; those involved in this ministry should be prayerful, regularly practicing Christians who acknowledge his healing love and are willing to pray and listen for guidance in order to minister appropriately to others.

2. Safety.

All reasonable steps should be taken to ensure the safety of the person receiving this ministry. People have a right to know what is being provided and how they will be ministered to.

3. Accountability and diocesan regulations.

Everyone involved in the healing ministry needs clear lines of accountability to recognize who holds relevant authority within their parish church. All reasonable steps should be taken by those involved to ensure their awareness of current law as it applies to this ministry, e.g. data protection, informed consent. Legal liability issues must be considered from an insurance viewpoint. Existing diocesan regulations should be also followed.

4. Training.

Individuals should receive appropriate training in this ministry and be kept up to date with developments and its ecumenical expression. Healing team leaders must ensure that members have opportunities for training and a common understanding of good practice.

5. Competence and boundaries.

Persons in this ministry should be aware of their personal limitations and ensure that they are properly prepared and fit to be involved. If fitness is doubtful or compromised or there is a conflict of interest, they should withdraw from ministering to others. Professional boundaries with health care professionals and chaplaincies should be observed.

6. Personal conduct.

The healing ministry is part of the message of the gospel; the personal conduct of everyone involved should encourage confidence in this ministry and not undermine it. Language, personal hygiene, general appearance, body language and touch used by those ministering should be appropriate, considerate and courteous towards those receiving it. No-one should be ministered to against their will.

7 . Confidentiality and public statements.

People's privacy and dignity should be respected and protected. Any limitations to confidentiality should be explained in advance and any disclosure should be restricted to relevant information. It should be conveyed only to appropriate people, normally with the parishioner's consent, and not misused in any way.

8. Counselling and psychotherapy.

These specific treatments, as distinct from pastoral care and listening, should only be provided by accredited counsellors and therapists who adhere to the codes of ethics and practice of their regulatory organizations and who have professional insurance cover.

9 Deliverance.

The House of Bishops' guidelines (1975) should be followed and diocesan advisors consulted when necessary.

10. Partnership.

The healing ministry should be carried out in co-operation, where appropriate, with chaplains and representatives of our ecumenical partners, and those involved in professional and voluntary healthcare, whilst recognizing that they may be bound by other codes of conduct.

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Please see <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/deliverance-ministry>

and <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safeguarding-children-young-people-and-vulnerable-adults/section-41-deliverance-ministry>

Appendix 2

The House of Bishops' Guidelines for Good Practice in the Deliverance Ministry 1975 (revised 2012)

Jesus, in his life, suffering and death, and in his resurrection and ascension defeated evil and brought the hope of salvation to everyone. So we can be confident that when we pray the Lord's Prayer for deliverance from evil, God hears us, and that praying with people for their needs and protection is often an appropriate way of ministering to them.

Some people, however, seek specific help when going through times of suffering and anxiety, or when distressed by what seem to be continuing experiences of evil within them or around them. For these people, it may be right to ask for God's saving help through the Church's deliverance ministry.

However, particular caution needs to be exercised, especially when ministering to someone who is in a distressed or disturbed state. Consequently, the following guidelines should be borne in mind in relation to requests for the ministry of deliverance.

1. It should be undertaken by experienced persons authorized by the diocesan bishop

- *The ministry of exorcism and deliverance may only be exercised by a priest authorized by the diocesan bishop.*
- *Everyone involved in this ministry needs clear lines of accountability and the authority of the priest specifically holding this responsibility on the Bishop's behalf needs to be recognized.*
- *All should have proper supervision and should abide by these guidelines and by diocesan regulations. Each diocesan bishop will draw up local regulations or guidelines for the ministry of deliverance for the diocese.*
- *All individuals authorized for this ministry should receive appropriate training and be kept up to date with developments, as well as understanding the deliverance practices of other churches.*
- *This ministry should never be undertaken by one person ministering alone; the authorized person should always be accompanied by another priest or lay minister of mature pastoral experience who is similarly authorized.*
- *Everyone involved in performing this ministry should be covered by adequate insurance. The bishop should ensure that the diocesan board of finance has an insurance policy in place to cover anyone authorised by the bishop to exercise this ministry.*

2. It should be done in the context of prayer and sacrament

- If an exorcism is to be performed, permission for it must be received under the authority of a diocesan bishop, for each specific exercise of such a ministry.
- The relevant incumbent will normally be both consulted and involved.
- Suitable resources from The Book of Common Prayer, Common Worship or any other approved source should normally be used as determined by the bishop.
- The recipient(s) should be able to trust and to draw confidence from the personal conduct and faith of any person involved in the exercise of deliverance ministry.

- The recipient(s) should be made aware that what is offered is a specific ministry of the Church and as such draws them into the presence of Jesus Christ in his own healing ministry.
- This ministry may be exercised in the context of or with the addition of the sacraments.
- Language, body language and touch should be courteous and considerate.
- Recipients should be made aware of how the ministry is to be exercised and no one should receive ministry against their will.
- All such ministry should be done with regard to the House of Bishops' safeguarding policies and best practice for children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Any complaints about personal conduct and/or lack of attention to safeguarding should be taken seriously and referred to the appropriate senior diocesan officer for investigation.

3. It should be done in collaboration with the resources of medicine

- A multi-disciplinary approach is to be desired, consulting and collaborating as necessary with doctors, psychologists and psychiatrists, and recognizing that health-care professionals and related agencies are bound by codes of conduct.
- In relation to counselling and psychotherapy, it should be noted that these should only be provided by suitably accredited counsellors and therapists.

4. It should be followed up by continuing pastoral care

- Diocesan advisers for deliverance ministry should be available to advise and when necessary, to work with clergy and chaplains in providing continuing pastoral care on a case-by-case basis.
- People in receipt of such ministry should be encouraged to find a caring and supportive home within their local Christian community.

5. It should be done with the minimum of publicity

- The privacy and dignity of individuals and families should be respected.
- Confidential records should be kept by those carrying out deliverance ministry to protect both those to whom they minister and those who are ministering, within the constraints of the Data Protection Act.
- Any limitations to confidentiality should be explained in advance and any disclosure should be restricted to relevant information, which should be conveyed only to appropriate persons, normally with consent and again, within the constraints of the Data Protection Act.