

Candidacy for Ordained Ministry

Introduction

Pastors are baptized persons whom the ELCIC calls and ordains to the church's ministry of Word and Sacrament. On behalf of the church, pastors give leadership and vision to Christian communities of faith. Pastors are called to provide faithful preaching, teaching and witness to the Scriptures and the doctrinal teaching of the ELCIC. They work in intentional partnership with bishops, other pastors, diaconal ministers, lay leaders in congregations and synods, synod and national staff, and ecumenical partners in common mission.

Called and accountable to this church, the ordained ministers also extend the ministry of Word and Sacrament beyond congregations into specialized settings such as institutional chaplaincy; colleges and seminaries; camps and missionary fields; and synodical and national offices.

In preparation for service, candidates for ordained ministry complete a four-year Master of Divinity degree, which includes a supervised internship and a unit of supervised pastoral education. The MDiv is normally completed at a seminary of the ELCIC or of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Under certain circumstances, a candidate may study for a Bachelor of Theology or a Diploma in Theology in place of the MDiv. A candidate for ordained ministry must be endorsed by a synodical CTEL and will be considered a candidate for service to the whole church.

Standards

Persons rostered as ordained ministers of this church shall:

1. demonstrate commitment to Christ;
2. accept and adhere to the Scriptures as the inspired Word of God;
3. accept and adhere to the Lutheran Confessions of this church;
4. show willingness and ability to serve in response to the needs of the church;
5. have academic and practical qualifications for ministry, including leadership abilities and competence in interpersonal relationships;
6. exhibit commitment to lead a life worthy of the gospel of Christ and in so doing to be an example in faithful service and holy living;
7. receive and accept a letter of call; and
8. maintain active membership in a congregation of this church.

The ELCIC understands the call to ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament to mean that:

- ✦ ordained ministers, called by God through the church, are accountable to the Word of God for the sake of the gospel of Jesus Christ;
- ✦ ordained ministers are called by God through the church and are not self-chosen or self-appointed and do not select a ministry context independent of the church;
- ✦ ordained ministers are called by God through the church for a ministry of servanthood, and not for the exercise of domination or coercive power;
- ✦ ordained ministry is a privilege granted by God through the call of the church and is not a right of the individual; and
- ✦ ordained ministers voluntarily place themselves under the legitimate authority and discipline of this church, and assent to the polity of this church.

All ordained ministers must state a clear intention to live and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with these expectations.

Academic and Practical Criteria for Ordination

In preparation for ordination as a pastor of this church, a candidate is required to engage in a comprehensive program which includes: 1) theological education; 2) formation for ministry; 3) supervised pastoral education; and 4) a nine to 12 month internship overseen by an ELCIC seminary.

1. Theological Education

Candidates for ministry in the ELCIC are expected to be a graduate of a recognized college or university and earn a Master of Divinity, Bachelor of Theology or Diploma in Theology at one of the seminaries of this church. The seminaries of the ELCIC offer programs of preparation for ministry that are of the highest academic quality, faithful to the Lutheran tradition, and uniquely suited to meet the challenges facing this church today. The course of theological study is designed to prepare a pastor to express and reflect on this church's understanding of the gospel and the ministry of the church as expressed in the historic Lutheran confessions. This study is also designed to prepare a pastor to understand the mission of this church in today's world both individually and as a member of society and the world.

With the approval of their CTEL students may be permitted to study at an accredited theological school other than one of the ELCIC. (See page B-6 for "Guidelines for Theological Education at Seminaries Other Than ELCIC".)

2. Spiritual Formation

All candidates for ordained or diaconal ministry are expected to engage in spiritual formation through regular worship, prayer and other spiritual disciplines.

3. Supervised Pastoral Education

ELCIC seminaries require one quarter of supervised pastoral education in their degree and diploma programs. Such a course provides an opportunity to practice the art of pastoral care while converting experience into learning. The usual program to meet this requirement is a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) or Pastoral Counseling Education (PCE) accredited by the Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education (CAPPE).

4. Supervised Internship

Internship facilitates the integration of academic study and theological education with the practice of ministry. A positive Endorsement for internship from CTEL is required prior to placement in an internship setting. The ELCIC seminaries serve on behalf of the church to provide a learning experience where a candidate has opportunity to give attention to contextualization, reflection, integration and evaluation (See "Internship for Ordination in the ELCIC", page B-4).

Steps in Candidacy

Persons seeking ordination as pastors in the ELCIC are expected to participate fully in all steps of the candidacy process established by the national church and administered by a synod CTEL. The process consists of four phases described in subsequent sections of the Candidacy Manual.

- 1) Registration (see Section D) involves initial contact by an individual with a synod bishop or CTEL committee, completion of the Registration application and forms including recommendations from a variety of sources, a structured interview and psychological testing and career evaluation.
- 2) Initial Endorsement concludes the Registration phase. Endorsement by the CTEL is required for ordination candidates before beginning theological studies.

- 3) Annual Endorsement (see Section E) is required for continuation in studies and for internship. Reports of academic and contextual education are required as well as successful completion of the annual Developmental Interview.
- 4) Final Evaluation (see Section F) combines a final evaluation report and recommendation by the CTCL with self-evaluation by the candidate and reports from a variety of sources. A positive recommendation will bring the candidate to Examination (Colloquy) consisting of a written examination and interview by the synod Examining Committee. The Examining Committee may then recommend the candidate to Synod Council for first call and ordination.

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Internship for Ordination in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

Introduction

All candidates for ordination are required to complete an internship according to standards set by this church and outlined in “ELCA/ELCIC Internship Standards and Guidelines” adopted in 1992 (see Appendix 4).

INTERNSHIP IS ...

... an educational program of the ELCIC for candidates preparing for the ordained ministry in the ELCIC. The program provides for extended and thorough involvement in the work of ministry. Normally serving in a congregation of this church, the intern is supervised jointly by a pastor and the seminary in co-operation with members of congregations, other pastors and other interns. Through the internship the candidate engages in the full range of ministerial work and is guided simultaneously in developing attitudes, understandings and skills vital to the pastoral office. Except for presiding at the sacraments and solemnising marriages, the intern becomes deeply involved in all aspects of congregational life and pastoral responsibilities.

Standards

The ELCIC requires all candidates for ordination to serve a nine- to 12-month internship. Students ordinarily serve their internship after having completed a minimum number of courses required by the seminary, ordinarily the equivalent to two years of theological studies.

Concurrent internships (half time for two years while engaging in academic work) are possible with the approval of CTEL and the seminary and availability of sites. Internships in other countries or in specialized situations may be arranged from time to time. Information about these may be obtained from the internship directors at the ELCIC seminaries.

ELCIC and ELCA seminaries co-operate in arranging for placements throughout Canada and the United States, and take into consideration both the desires of candidates and the availability of placements. Usually placement of candidates takes place in March. Internship placement for seminary students is the responsibility of the respective seminaries. Each seminary provides supervisory training, inclusive of training involved in the development of a Learning Contract. The dates for starting and ending the internship, as well as housing accommodations, etc. are agreed upon by the intern, the congregation and the pastor supervisor in consultation with the seminary and in accord with ELCIC guidelines; these particulars are written into an internship agreement signed by the intern, pastor supervisor and congregational council representative.

ELCIC seminaries continually seek to enhance the educational value of the program, especially in developing sound relationships among the intern, the supervising pastor and the congregation. To this end, interns and pastors participate in training events and “cluster” meetings with nearby interns and supervisors. They share concerns and experiences to increase mutual understanding and co-operation. Some clusters may have an inter-Lutheran or ecumenical flavour as interns of other denominations participate.

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Internships are expected to be congregationally based; where non-congregational settings are desired, such internships are required to have a congregational component. Settings are approved by the seminary and the bishop of the synod relating to the setting upon application by the congregation or by joint application of the congregation and non-congregational ministry.

Written application is to be made to the respective seminary by January 31. Such application is to be made to Waterloo Lutheran Seminary for sites in the Eastern Synod and to the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Saskatoon for sites in the four western Canadian synods.

Alternate models to the usual third year congregationally-based internship setting may be possible as long as ELCIC standards for internship are met. Such alternative models require approval by CTEL, the bishop at the intended site, and the respective seminary before being implemented. Some examples for alternative models are:

a) Fourth Year Internship:

If the number of available internship sites is less than needed to place potential interns in a given year, those for whom a third-year internship cannot be arranged will be eligible for a fourth-year internship.

Inasmuch as internship is based on an “action-reflection model,” the intern will be required to complete a post-internship reflection project designed in consultation the seminary’s internship director and may be required to return to seminary for an additional term.

The provision for a fourth-year internship is not a matter of choice by the student but a matter of circumstance and requires approval of CTEL, the respective bishop and the respective seminary.

b) Concurrent Internship:

After completing seminary requirements for internship placement and with prior approval by the CTEL, a student may be placed in a concurrent internship. This is placement in a supervised internship setting for a duration of time equivalent to the normal requirements (e.g. 18 months at half-time internship of 9 months equivalency, or 24 months at half-time for 12 months equivalency).

While arranging internships on behalf of the ELCIC, the respective seminaries, through their internship director, are encouraged to support the following factors relative to specific placement sites and/or arrangements and are urged to see that they are incorporated into the Internship Agreement of the respective intern.

1. Since pastoral supervision is basic to the educational components of internship, interns are not to be placed in congregations or parishes that are without a called pastor. Should a vacancy occur during the internship, if at least one-half of the internship has taken place, then the interim pastor may serve as pastor-supervisor for the duration of the internship upon agreement by the seminary, CTEL and congregation or parish. If half the internship is not completed, the internship director shall consult with the CTEL, seminary and congregation or parish.
2. Where a potential placement is considered for a World Mission context, such needs to be processed by the seminary in partnership with the National Office. World Mission sites must apply in writing to the respective seminary and provide documentation in writing as to quality of supervision to be provided. Placements to be considered for World Missions shall be assessed by the seminary and CTEL on the basis of how well such a placement correlates with ministry goals.

3. Where a placement is considered in a parish/non-parish combination, the respective seminary shall ensure that pastoral supervision and an Internship Committee are well coordinated to serve the educational requirements of the internship program.

General Application and Procedures:

The *ELCIC Candidacy Manual* shall be the national standard for internships and shall take precedence over the *Manual for Contextual Ministry* (in the case of Waterloo Seminary) or *Manual for Internship and Handbook for Lay Internship Committees* (in the case of Lutheran Theological Seminary, Saskatoon).

Guidelines for Theological Education at Seminaries Other Than ELCIC or ELCA

A decision by a candidate to attend a seminary other than ELCIC or ELCA should be made only after approval of CTEL.

A non-ELCIC seminary accredited by the Association of Theological Schools may offer resources which expand and enrich the opportunities for theological study for persons preparing for ordained ministry. Such a seminary must have a theological stance deemed to be consistent with that of the ELCIC. It is not required that candidates hold a degree from an ELCIC seminary.

A candidate who is considering attending another seminary is to register with CTEL and comes under the same candidacy requirements as those attending an ELCIC seminary. It is expected that the student will register and obtain initial endorsement from CTEL prior to beginning theological studies and will cooperate fully with the annual endorsement and final evaluation steps of the candidacy process. Recommendations in writing or in person from the faculty of the other seminary should be requested by CTEL in order to make fully informed decisions for endorsement and final evaluation.

In order for adequate support and assessment by the CTEL, it is required that a minimum of two years must elapse between the initial endorsement of a candidate and the final recommendation for colloquy by CTEL.

Upon approval by the CTEL for attendance at another seminary, the candidate is required to apply to be an affiliate student with an ELCIC seminary so that an advisor may be assigned to guide the candidate in developing an academic program that will meet the requirements for ordination. The advisor will also assist the candidate to design a program for their Lutheran formation residency in an ELCIC seminary, determine readiness for internship and assist in the process of arranging an internship. The affiliate seminary will provide to the CTEL a final evaluation of the candidate. An annual affiliation fee must be paid to the seminary by the candidate and an affiliation agreement be signed and filed with the CTEL.

The faculty of the affiliate ELCIC seminary will appraise the candidate's theological courses to determine if they meet the standards of the ELCIC. Particular attention shall be given to adequate preparation in Lutheran theology, especially in leading Lutheran worship and in systematic theology. This appraisal is to be submitted to CTEL.

Internship

All candidates for ordination in the ELCIC are required to complete an internship under the supervision of an ELCIC seminary. CTEL may approve internship supervision by an ELCA seminary for students studying at a seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

The internship year is scheduled in consultation with the CTEL and the affiliate ELCIC seminary. Internship for students attending other seminaries may only be scheduled following the minimum Lutheran formation year of residency at an ELCIC seminary. In addition, the candidate may be required to return to the ELCIC seminary for an additional term following completion of the internship.

Residency

A candidate who studies at another seminary is required to complete a minimum one year residency at an ELCIC seminary for Lutheran formation. The residency is to entail full-time course work at an ELCIC seminary resulting in at least the equivalent of five courses for each of the two terms plus supervised

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pastoral education. The year of residency may be waived by the CTEL in consultation with the affiliate ELCIC seminary. If the residency year is waived, the CTEL/CCOM is to make every effort to ensure

adequate Lutheran formation occurs in the candidate's training. The annual fee is set by the ELCIC Program Committee for Leadership for Ministry, in consultation with the seminaries.

This period of residency may be taken at any point during a student's M.Div. program or it may follow the completing of an M.Div. program at a non-ELCIC seminary. It must be completed before internship.

The year of residency has the following purpose and objectives:

1. to provide the candidate with a solid grounding in Lutheran systematic theology and the Lutheran Confessions, and to enable the candidate to articulate a Lutheran theological perspective. This happens not only in the study of theology but in the study of church history, Bible, worship, preaching, education, pastoral care, and ethics;
2. to provide the candidate with a sound understanding of ministry in a Lutheran context: a clear sense of the centrality of Word and Sacrament; an appreciation of the relationship between lay and ordained ministries; a familiarity with policy and practice associated with approval, call, and mobility; and the hopes and visions of the ELCIC for its ordained ministers; and
3. to enable the candidate to become part of the seminary community, to participate in the worship life of the seminary, and to establish relationships with future colleagues in ministry which are marked by mutual support and accountability.

ELCIC seminaries which accept students for residency are responsible for providing a program by which the objectives of the requirement can be met. They are encouraged to make available to CTEs and candidates a description of such a program and to individualize the program to fit the needs and experience of the candidate. It may be possible for a candidate with an M.Div degree from another seminary to work toward or earn an advanced degree while fulfilling the objectives of the year of residency.