

The Holistic Pathway for Pastors Serving in Parish Ministry – A Glossary

1. The Discernment Process

This time period is intended to help persons without any previous pastoral experience to discern their call, understand the importance of the “Heart of a Shepherd” (qualities of a pastor) and review the constitution and main foundational principles of CALC: 1) the authority of Scripture (as the divinely inspired, revealed and inerrant Word of God), 2) Law and Gospel, 3) theology of the Cross and 4) relevance of the historic Lutheran Confessions. In the case of a person having previous pastoral experience who a CALC congregation is considering to call, this stage will consist primarily of an interview with the candidate to determine agreement with the CALC’s constitution, in particular, Article 3, CALC’s Confession of Faith.

2. Application Process

The application process will require the candidate to write three short essays on these questions.

1. What is your understanding of the authority of Scripture?
2. What is your understanding of the theology of the Cross and the importance of Law and Gospel?
3. What is your understanding of a pastor/shepherd in parish ministry?

As well, information forms on present academic, professional and lived out experience will also be an important part of the application process. This information is gathered and presented to the Pastoral Review Panel who along with a representative of the congregation who has called/sponsored this person will meet with the pastoral candidate in order to determine and suggest a specific route as he/she anticipates moving into full time parish ministry.

3. Pastoral Review Panel (PRP)

Unlike a traditional colloquy body which is commonly understood to be involved in examining and certifying a candidate who is then placed on a roster of certified pastors who can then be open to a call, the Pastoral Review Panel (PRP) is intended to assist experienced pastors looking for a call and those seeking to be a pastor with their entry into pastoral ministry with CALC. The PRP looks at each specific candidate and puts into place a specific pathway – a pathway which is tailored to and takes into account past experiences, academic credentials and perceived needs. Information gathered through the Time of Discernment and Application Process for those seeking to become a pastor is shared with the PRP. In the case of an experienced pastor who a CALC congregation is considering to call, it is unlikely that the CCPF and three foundational theological courses will be a requirement. However, if for example, such a person has received his/her education from a non-Lutheran school or seminary, it is likely that the candidate after accepting a call by a congregation would be expected to take courses on Lutheran beliefs and teaching (most likely the three foundational courses). For a pastor being considered for a call by a CALC congregation, the PRP’s primary function is to assist that congregation in making a well-informed decision concerning the call of a Scripturally-grounded, solidly Lutheran pastor who will meet the congregation’s pastoral needs.

The panel will be comprised of at least seven people, including, 1) a representative from the Institute of Lutheran Theology (ILT) who will pay particular attention to the doctrine and

theology that guides this church body, 2) a representative independent of CALC who is expected to have expertise in the area of personal psychological and internal growth development including a keen interest in family and marriage, 3) CALC's Pastoral Personnel Director who will provide the first point of contact for a new candidate for ministry or a pastor being considered for call by a CALC congregation, 4) a lay member of CALC who is not a member of the National Council or the host congregation, 5) a member of CALC's National Council, and 6) a representative of the host congregation which has either called or is in support of a candidate, and 7) the traveling mentor.

4. Host Congregation

Corresponds to either a congregation that is sponsoring an individual within their congregation who feels that the Holy Spirit is calling him or her to ministry or a congregation which is open to a call and is considering a specific experienced pastoral candidate. Host congregations are expected to help in identifying and supporting potential pastoral candidates in their midst.

5. Christ-Centered Pastoral Formation (CCPF)

A 3-week intensive program somewhat similar to the established Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) program. Unlike CPE, which is a multi-faith program, CCPF is Christ-centered. During the CCPF program a candidate has time and an opportunity for internal self-examination with respect to Heart, Soul, Body and Mind aspects of the Holistic Pathway.

a) Heart

This facet of the CCPF program takes place in hospitals and care facilities. A supervisor leads candidates through written verbatim and individual and group discussions on how to effectively relate to people under sometimes stressful and difficult situations. The purpose is to recognize and correct any weakness that potential pastors may have in dealing with relationships.

b) Soul

This facet of the CCPF program helps the pastoral candidate to put into place a structured discipline process of staying connected to the source of our life, Jesus, by learning and staying close to the Word, praying, meditating, contemplating, and journaling. Each candidate will meet with a spiritual director who will help them to lay a solid foundation of keeping connected to Christ and to help them also to examine their relationship and ministry in light of God's view of them as a called pastor.

c) Body

This facet of the CCPF program examines how pastors take care of their physical bodies as well as their families, and marriages in order to create balance in their lives and living. Each candidate meets with a parish nurse to look specifically at self care and family care, and tries to implement some disciplines in this regard.

d) Mind

This facet of the CCPF program examines the leadership, organizational and administrative skills. Different from theology, this component helps to develop practical, useable skills for parish ministry.

6. Personal Mentor

A Personal Mentor is placed with a candidate immediately following the first PRP meeting. This person is a mature pastor who walks alongside this person in prayer, support and encouragement during the challenging 3-month CCPF program.

7. Three Foundational Courses

Upon completing the CCPF program and where prescribed by the PRP, the candidate will take three foundational theological courses offered by the Institute of Lutheran Theology (ILT), thus entering into the academic growth (nurturing of the mind) portion of the candidate's Holistic Pathway for ministry. ILT is an autonomous, multi-location and web-based institute working to offer Scripturally-grounded, solidly Lutheran theological education for both clergy and lay persons. Classes offered by the Institute can be taken from anywhere in the world. All you need is a computer and high-speed internet connection, and you'll be set up for real time interactive theological education. The three foundational courses required as part of the Holistic Pathway are as follows:

- 1) Principles of Biblical Interpretation
- 2) Luther and His Catechisms
- 3) Proclaiming God's Word

8. Ordination

According to *The Book of Concord* (Kolb & Wengert Edition, page 341), "it is necessary for the church to retain the right to call, choose and ordain ministers. This is a gift bestowed exclusively on the church, and no human authority can take it away from the church". Accordingly an ordination is nothing more than a rite or ceremony confirming a pastor's call by a CALC congregation. The ceremony includes a public declaration by the called pastor to approve and subscribe to CALC's constitution and Confession of Faith. In the case of a congregation joining CALC along with their current pastor, while not going through an ordination service, the pastor, nonetheless, would be expected to participate in an installation (affirmation of ordination) service where such vows are affirmed.

9. Traveling Mentor

When a candidate begins to serve in a congregation, CALC's Traveling Mentor will visit the pastor in his/her congregation to give support, helping the pastor to cope with the academic rigor, holding the pastor accountable to all components of the program and providing a good listening ear to deal with any congregational challenges during the continuing education process.

10. Continuing Education

Upon successfully completing the three foundational courses, the candidate will be expected to pursue a continuing education program toward a Pastoral Ministry Certificate consisting of the following nine courses offered by the Institute of Lutheran Theology:

- 1) Lutheran Reformers and The Book of Concord
- 2) Old Testament Theology and History
- 3) New Testament Theology and History
- 4) The History of the Christian Church to 1500
- 5) The History of the Christian Church 1500 to Present

- 6) Systematic Theology
- 7) Defending and Spreading the Faith
- 8) Lutheran Worship
- 9) Pastoral Theology and Counseling

However, upon completing the three foundational theological courses, the candidate may instead opt to pursue a Masters of Divinity (M.Div.) program, receiving credit from the first three courses.

11. Pastoral Ministry Certification or M.Div.

In recognition of the need for a supply of well-trained, confessional Lutheran pastors, which is not being met by traditional M.Div. programs, particularly for smaller rural congregations, the Institute of Lutheran Theology is offering a 12-course Pastoral Ministry Certification (PMC) program. Fortunately, the PMC program was being developed as an ILT initiative around the same time that the design of the Holistic Pathway for pastoral preparation was being conceived. With some generous accommodation by ILT, particularly with respect to the timing and content of three of its 12 courses, the needs of the PMC program and the needs of the HP program were both met. Upon successfully completing all 12 courses of the PMC program through the duration of the HP program, the candidate will be accorded a certificate from the Institute of Lutheran Theology in recognition of that achievement following upon a disputation (oral defense). A representative of the host congregation is welcome to participate in the disputation. At an estimated cost of \$600/course, a CALC student could take all course work for \$7,200, a tuition price less than one semester's tuition at an ELCA college in the United States. The three basic courses in the PMC program can be used to waive 6 credits of the M.Div program and an additional 18 credits may be academically challenged based on PMC courses. This means that successful completion of the PMC program may be used to satisfy some requirements for the M.Div degree and thereby shorten the length of that program.