

(HOW)
IS GOD
CALLING
?

the holy work of reflection and discernment

the holy work of reflection and discernment

This is a discernment toolkit provided by ELCA Seminaries for campus ministries and young adults. It was made possible by the Richard. H. Barkalow fund managed by Thrivent Impact & Investing.



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Ministry For All

We are all invited into ministry. All baptized Christians are ministers and part of the priesthood of all believers. Ministry looks different now than it did 50 years ago, or even 10 years ago. In our rapidly changing world, our church needs leaders who are willing to follow the Spirit's call in our particular time and place. There are a lot of hard and hurting places in our world, and there are a lot of hopeful possibilities for how God's church (that's all of us!) might respond with faithfulness, courage, wisdom, and creativity.

Our Goals:

- 💡 reiterate the calling to all to serve as ministers and to continue reflecting on one's particular calling to serve God's church and world
- 💞 stir curiosity and support interest in exploring theological education
- 🗣️ explore the two ordination pathways in the ELCA
- 👓 provide resources and possible next steps for discernment for those considering serving as a pastor or deacon in the ELCA

Introduction

Many People Many Ministries

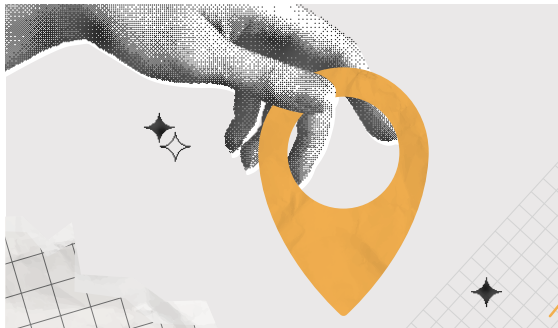
For some, ministry will look like being a teacher who is motivated and sustained by faith to love each student, to advocate for those slipping through the cracks, and to ensure accessible learning. For another, it may look like being a climate scientist whose day to day work of charts, figures, and advocacy for policy change is rooted in a call to live in a mutual and just relationship with God's creation. Ministry may look like serving as a care minister in a congregation visiting those who aren't able to get to church, or starting a ministry to support refugees in your community. A question to ask ourselves is, "How might each of us serve God's church and world?" Young adults may feel frustrated by "the church" or feel it is not living up to its calling. Have some conversation about How might you contribute to ways the church might grow, change, and live more faithfully in this time and place? The church is always reforming and needs reformers!

My vocation is to be a part of the flourishing of God's world by young Lutherans around the world as they accompany leaders, and to advocate for more intergenerationally just theologies, churches, and countries. My call is to serve the gospel – to tell God's story and be a material part of realizing the flourishing of God's whole creation, realizing God's justice and peace on earth right now. My vocation is to help the church embrace the gifts of young people alongside every generation to do this gospel work together. When I am despairing and justice feels impossible, I am reminded by Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in Matthew that to be a peacemaker is to be like a child. It requires the faith I had as a child, the holy, stubborn, some might call it naïve, conviction that peace is not only possible, but it is a promise from God. Jesus says that rather than being silly or inexperienced, being like a child is a blessing. It reminds me that recapturing the spiritual gifts of our younger selves and embracing the gifts of overlooked generations – young and old - is a way we can reconnect with the urgency to be a part of God's change in the world when we have become hopeless or resigned to the way things are.

Savanna Sullivan | Program Executive for Youth (Young Adults) at the Lutheran World Federation

Reflection Questions

- What ministries are you interested in exploring locally, nationally, or globally?
- How are you feeling called to be part of the flourishing of God's world?
- What particular gifts do you as a young person feel called to offer God's church and world?
- How are you uniquely gifted as a young adult?



Theological Education

Many Ways to be in Ministry

Faithfully responding to God's call means being open to imagining together what God's church might look like today and into the future. This is work we can all be part of. Some may choose to respond to a call by becoming a pastor or deacon in the ELCA. This may look like serving in a congregation, and it also might look like being a deacon who is a therapist, or a pastor who preaches and is a community organizer.

In the ELCA we call our pastors and deacons **rostered leaders**.

What's a rostered leader?

A rostered leader is someone who goes through a formal candidacy and formation process, is theologically trained, and is set apart publicly for ministry. In the ELCA we have two rostered ministries: **Word and Sacrament** (pastors) and **Word and Service** (deacons). The roster itself is the list of these public leaders who have been recognized by the ELCA. You might also sometimes see these people referred to as **Minister of Word and Sacrament** (pastors) or **Minister of Word and Service** (deacons).

The following pages expand on these roles, and may be useful for anyone who is in discernment about ministry or exploring the differences between **Ministry of Word and Sacrament** or **Ministry of Word and Service**. This material easily adapts to group and 1-on-1 discernment conversations, as well as individual reflection.

Reflection Questions

- Have you ever thought about seminary/theological education? If so, what's at the root of that interest?
- What are you curious about what you might want to explore through further theological education?
- How might theological education equip you with confidence and courage in your vocation?
- Who might this education help you serve? How so?

Theological Education?

Not just for future pastors and deacons

People often think about theological education as preparation for ordained ministry in the church, but there are many additional reasons one might want to explore theological education. Here are a few reflections from those who felt called to seminary to enhance their ministry, without the intention of becoming an ordained minister.

As an outdoor ministry professional I frequently find myself in various ministry contexts but have never felt a call to rostered ministry. Nevertheless, I have a deep love of learning coupled with persistent theological curiosity. I am pursuing a Master of Arts degree at Wartburg Theological Seminary in order to satisfy some of this curiosity and to engage with new perspectives on issues of faith, vocation, and life in Christian community. I fully believe that my seminary experience may raise more questions than answers, but such is the nature of the Spirit and discernment.

Bjørn Anderson | MA student;
Wartburg Theological Seminary

It was in my job as the Program Director for ELCA Young Adult Ministry that I felt a call to seminary. I was convicted that the young adult community I was serving around the country was a **real** Christian community, a congregation, and that this community deserved educated and thoughtful spiritual leadership just like any other. I went to seminary to more deeply invest in my own academic theological knowledge and pastoral care skills so that I could serve this national "congregation" with confidence and integrity. As the only young adult member of the LWF Staff, my theological education was not only an invaluable part of my personal spiritual formation, but it has also given me the confidence to speak up and even raise tension in conversations about church leadership and theology with Christian leaders of all ages and education levels from over 100 countries. Most importantly, though, theological education has given me language and tools to serve this global congregation of young people - to teach and to learn new theologies alongside them and to hold their joy and grief in a pastoral way.

Savanna Sullivan | Program Executive
for Youth (Young Adults) at Lutheran World Federation



Called to the Process: Candidacy

formally entering the process to become a rostered leader in the ELCA

In the ELCA, one doesn't discern a call to becoming a pastor or deacon individually. There is a process called candidacy that includes being accompanied by a candidacy committee, theological education, reflection, and faith formation.

Candidacy is more than a series of hoops to get through, but is part of the discernment process. Since the specifics of the candidacy process periodically change, it's best to look at the most current resources on the [ELCA website](#)¹³ or contact a rostered leader for help.



Note: Even if you are not sure you are called to rostered ministry, you may be called to a formal discernment process with the church. *It's ok to explore!*

Reflection Questions

- What do you feel on the fence about with regard to your own vocation?
- What ministry have you engaged in that has been helpful for discernment? Or what might you want to try out, to help facilitate further discernment?
- Have you heard an internal or external call? Share a bit about your experience.
- What might help you listen more deeply for both internal and external call?



I definitely heard an external call before my internal one... Internally... I doubted that call. I thought I was not spiritually deep enough. I thought that I couldn't possibly write and deliver sermons on a regular basis. I thought that I needed to explore other vocations first. The candidacy process was crucial for me to embrace my inner sense of call. The interviews, essays, and mentors I received helped me begin to internalize the external call."

Rev. Katie Elkin Ziehr | Campus Pastor at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church & Lutheran Campus Ministry in Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Rostered Ministry Exploration

Called to Explore



Exploration, wonder, discernment, and process

Just as all vocational discernment is a process of exploration, listening to and wondering about a call to rostered ministry requires internal and external exploration. This may include talking with mentors, prayer and other spiritual practices, reading, taking a class, conversations with rostered leaders, attending a seminary discernment opportunity, enrolling in a seminary class, and more.

My feeling of call has only deepened in my time in seminary. When I started, I was on the fence about whether I really wanted to do the whole process of candidacy and CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education) and classes and internship, but as I dove deeper and leaned into the journey, I felt more and more confident in my call. I'm especially grateful for the opportunity to get off the seminary campus and actually do ministry as I was studying. This experience was very rewarding and really helpful in my discernment process.

Vicar Erik Nelson | Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Minneapolis; Senior, Luther Seminary

Rostered Ministry Exploration

Leadership is For All

Sacred responsibilities

Christian leaders are called and set apart to provide public leadership within and beyond faith communities. Leaders do not have all the answers, but are tasked with the sacred responsibility of giving voice and action to God's good news and prophetic word. This can be challenging, especially in polarizing times. Leadership is not only an important responsibility, but a calling. While it can be tempting to stay neutral or feel like it is your job to keep the peace, leadership often requires taking a stand with boldness and humility in alignment with God's calling to love God, love neighbor, and love self—which all sounds nice, but is often really hard! Leadership takes faithful courage.

Proclaiming the Word is For All

It's a both/and situation

All Christians are called to proclaim the Word. And, ministers of **Word and Sacrament** (pastors) as well as ministers of **Word and Service** (deacons) have the specific vocation of public proclamation.

Proclaiming Without Words

You've probably heard the quote mis-attributed to St Francis of Assisi: "Preach the gospel at all times. If necessary, use words."

While sharing the gospel through words is critical, might there be other ways to proclaim God's word? Romans 10:15b says "As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'"

Listening For Proclamation

There are a lot of words in our world, and often, not enough listening. Proclaiming a meaningful word in a particular context requires deep listening for God's voice in the desires, joys, sorrows, and questions of God's people and in God's creation.

Discerning Rostered Leadership

A consideration for all

The next pages offer reflection on the two different rosters in the ELCA. If you are facilitating a group, you might ask those in the group about what it might look like to be called to this specific vocation of ministry. Pay special attention to what quickens hearts, grows excitement, invites curiosity, or seems aligned with particular gifts, interests and skills.

Reflection Questions

- How did you first hear the Word of God?
- When have you heard something proclaimed that greatly impacted your life or shifted your perspective?
- What do you think needs to be proclaimed in our current context? How might rostered leaders proclaim this word?
- What makes proclamation trustworthy?
- It often takes courage to proclaim God's word. When have you heard a courageous word? When have you experienced a lack of courage in proclamation from leaders?
- What do you have to say that the world needs to hear?
- Beyond words, how else might one communicate God's pastoral and prophetic gospel?
- Share about a person you know who communicates Gospel truth without words. How do they do it?
- Who do you know who is an exceptional listener? What makes them a good listener?
- What do you see as the relationship between listening and proclaiming God's word?
- We all know people who talk too much, interrupt others, or bring the discussion back to themselves a lot. Maybe it's you! What are honest and loving ways we can grow in self-awareness as a listener to invite consistent practices of deeper listening?

Rostered Ministry Exploration

I Notice...

I Wonder...

Listening Activity: Public Proclamation

Watch The Right Reverend Mariann Budde,
offering words to President Trump:
[2025 Service of Prayer for the Nation](#)

During this two minute clip, Washington DC Episcopal Bishop The Right Reverend Mariann Budde offered clear words to President Trump after the inauguration.

Reflect together on the responsibility of all Christians, especially those in leadership, to give bold voice to God's pastoral and prophetic Gospel in the public sphere, as well as within congregations.

Remember:

Leadership takes
faithful courage



Above all, trust in the slow work of God.
We are quite naturally impatient in everything to reach the end without delay.
We should like to skip the intermediate stages.
We are impatient of being on the way to something unknown, something new.
And yet it is the law of all progress that it is made by passing through some stages of instability—and that it may take a very long time.
And so I think it is with you; your ideas mature gradually—let them grow, let them shape themselves, without undue haste.
Don't try to force them on, as though you could be today what time (that is to say, grace and circumstances acting on your own good will) will make of you tomorrow.
Only God could say what this new spirit gradually forming within you will be.
Give Our Lord the benefit of believing that his hand is leading you, and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself in suspense and incomplete.



Serving as a Deacon (1 of 2)

Word and Service ministry is the calling to serve as a **deacon**. While the ministry of deacons might be new to some, deacons have a long history in the church. The deaconess community in the ELCA traces its origins back to 1884!¹⁴ What is a deacon? In the ordination rite for deacons, this ministry is described this way:

The ministry of word and service has New Testament roots in the ministry of diakonia: Stephen, Philip, and five others oversee the distribution of food within the church in Jerusalem; Phoebe and Priscilla are identified with diakonia in Paul's letters.

Although this ministry has taken different forms throughout the church's history, its emphasis has been this: Those called to the ministry of word and service speak God's word to God's world, and in turn they speak also for the needs of God's world to the church; they give leadership in the church's mission to witness to God's love through both words and actions.¹⁵

Building Bridges Through Service

As described in the ordination rite, deacons are called to serve as bridges between God's church and God's world. Although they sometimes serve in congregations, deacons often serve in non-congregational settings including nonprofits, educational settings, prisons, music ministries, etc. They both bridge and create community between the church and the world. Jesus uses the word diakoneo about himself: "I am among you as one who serves" (Luke 22:27). Primary to the calling of deacons is service - service as witness to the world. The deacon's stole, worn across the body, is a symbol of the service to which they are called.

Connecting With A Deacon

Have you seen or experienced the ministry of deacons? If you're able, invite a deacon to your conversation, or, for individuals who are interested in potentially serving as a deacon, set up a conversation with an ELCA deacon. If you don't know any deacons, a good place to start would be your synod office. Hopefully they can recommend someone!



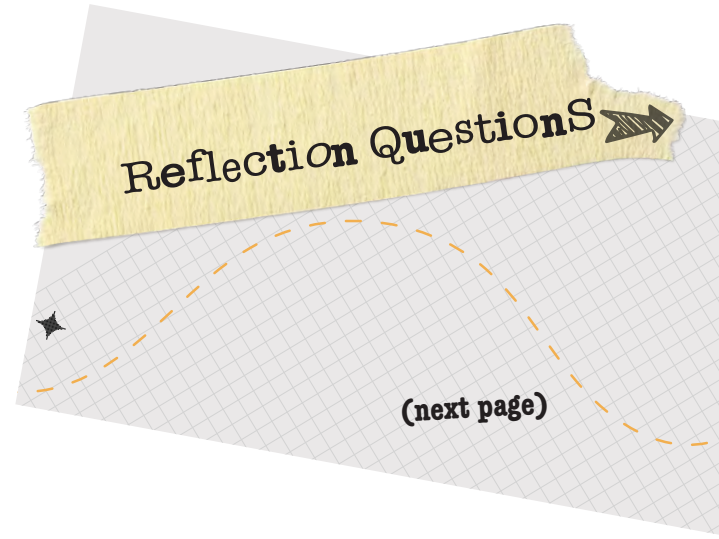
Optional Activity: Foot Washing

Take turns washing one another's feet.

The basin and towel is one of the symbols of deacons, recalling the story of Jesus washing his disciples' feet. We return to this story as part of Maundy Thursday during Holy Week. Read together John 13:1-17. Foot washing in the ancient world was practical. People's feet were dirty after traveling! However, usually a servant or lower-level person would wash a guest's feet. This is why Simon Peter is offended on Jesus' behalf, initially saying, "You will never wash my feet." But in this story Jesus crouches down and lovingly washes the feet of his disciples, knowing his time with them is coming to an end. Washing feet is vulnerable (for both people) and tender.



let's go to the



Reflection Questions

(next page)



Word & Service

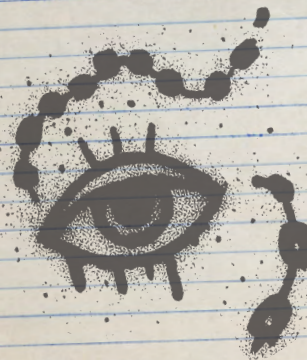
Serving as a Deacon (2 of 2)

Foot Washing Reflection Questions

- Have you ever had someone wash your feet? What was the experience like?
- Have you experienced foot washing as part of a Maundy Thursday service during Holy Week?
- What was it like to experience another person in our group washing your feet?
- Why do you think this was how Jesus chose to embody service?

Reflection Questions

Using the information on pg. 51, consider these reflection questions. Discuss in a group, journal individually, or do both and notice how internal and external discernment informs or colors your responses!



- Looking around at the needs in the world, what has broken your heart? What needs have you felt yourself drawn to address? Who do you feel called to serve?
- In your experience and observation, what word of God most needs to be heard in God's world?
- What do you think the world is communicating back to the church?
- In what ways do you feel called to be a bridge builder?
- What has been a meaningful experience of service in your life? Either serving or being served?
- Have you had someone tell you what they thought you should do, but it didn't feel right to you? How did you respond?
- Do you have multiple interests that at first might seem incompatible? Can others help you imagine how God

As a queer climate scientist who grew up in the ELCA, I figured that after undergrad, I would work for NOAA and continue to be active in a church. However, this plan didn't feel like it encompassed my full views and beliefs around how interconnected faith and environment are. Despite many church people telling me otherwise, I knew I didn't want to be a pastor. These comments made me feel like my gifts and talents weren't seen, and that I was simply a young warm body that could fill a spot. It wasn't until I learned about deacons and the Climate Justice and Faith Concentration at PLTS that I felt fully seen, and a path forward honoring my vocational call to attend to community and environment (and connect the sacred in both) emerged. My vocation becomes more tangible with each course and conversation with other deacons and scientists, as well as with my experience doing chaplaincy.

Julia Rankin | Diaconal Student at PLTS
in the Climate Justice and Faith Concentration





Activity: Read, then Reflect

If you're in a group, read the following scripture passages out loud.

In the ordination rite for Word and Sacrament ministry, these scripture passages are read aloud as part of the service:¹⁸

A reading from John: Jesus said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you. Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." | *John 20:21-23*

A reading from Matthew: Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." | *Matthew 28:18-20*

A reading from First Corinthians: I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. | *1 Corinthians 11:23-26*

As part of worship leadership, pastors often wear a stole. Here is how the stole is presented in the rite of ordination:

Receive this stole as a sign of your work, and live in obedience to the Lord Jesus, serving his people and remembering his promise: "Come to me, all you that

are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." *Matthew 11:28-30*

The Charge given to the new pastor in the rite of ordination includes these passages from scripture:

Hear the words of the apostles: Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called. | *1 Timothy 6:11-12*

And again: Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you guardians, to feed the church of God, obtained with the blood of God's own Son. | *Acts 20:28*

And again: Tend the flock of God that is in your charge, not under compulsion but willingly, not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock. And when the chief shepherd appears, you will win the crown of glory that never fades away. | *1 Peter 5:2-4*

And again: Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. | *1 Corinthians 4:1-2*

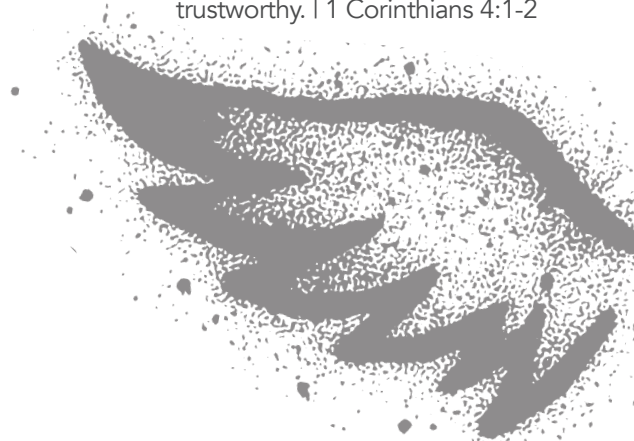
Serving as a Pastor (1 of 2)

Word and Sacrament ministry is the calling to serve as a pastor. Similar to deacons, pastors are called to proclaim God's Word. In addition, pastors are ministers of sacraments. In the ELCA we have two sacraments: Baptism and Holy Communion or Eucharist. Sometimes the ELCA will call the proclamation of the Word and sharing of sacraments as the means of grace.¹⁶

Worship Matters: An introduction to Worship, defines a sacrament in this way:

For Lutherans, a sacrament:

- (1) is something Jesus commanded us to do;
- (2) uses a physical element—something we can see, touch and sometimes taste;
- (3) is connected with God's promise, the word of God, which gives faith.¹⁷



Word & Sacrament

Serving as a Pastor (2 of 2)

There have been times when I've been in worship, consecrating the elements, and I felt like I had a spiritual hook in my chest, pulling me to that life of Word and Sacrament

Vicar Erik Nelson | Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Minneapolis; Student, Luther Seminary

Having only ever really been presented with one example of a pastor at that point—older, white, male—I didn't really see myself going to seminary. That changed when I served with the ELCA's Young Adults in Global Mission program in Palestine, where the experience of accompanying people living under occupation lit my heart on fire for the intersection of faith and justice. Now, I am eager to live out my call to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God as an ordained minister

Lyndsay Monsen | MDiv Student at LSTC and Candidate for Word and Sacrament in Metro Chicago Synod

Reflection Questions

Using the information on pg. 53, consider these reflection questions. Discuss in a group, journal individually, or do both and notice how internal and external discernment informs or colors your responses!

I Notice...

- What's your experience of receiving sacraments as part of worship?
- Is this definition of sacraments familiar to you or new?
- Have you attended an ordination for a pastor? What did you notice, feel, or experience as part of that worship service and rite of ordination?

I Wonder...

- Is there anything about Erik's experience (quote, left) that sounds similar to yours?
- What has been the role of sacraments in your faith journey?
- Re: Ordination Scripture passages read aloud...What do you notice? What do you wonder?
- Does the ministry described in these passages connect with your own sense of call? How so?
- Although pastors are called to help carry the burdens of others, ultimately Jesus takes the yoke upon himself. Whose burdens do you feel called to ease? To help carry?
- What examples of pastors did you witness growing up and how did that impact you?
- How do faith and justice connect for you as part of your own call?
- What stirs in you as you hear these words?
- Are there ways these passages feel like a call to you? How so?

FACILITATOR SUGGESTION:

Although members of your group have likely encountered individuals serving as ministers of Word and Sacrament (pastors), you could invite a local pastor to join your group to share about their experience. You may ask them questions related to the 6 elements of the Lutheran understanding of vocation to get a sense of their call story, in addition to questions about their day to day ministry. Another option is to help members of your group who might be particularly interested in Word and Sacrament ministry to find a 1-on-1 connection with a pastor to have a more intentional conversation.

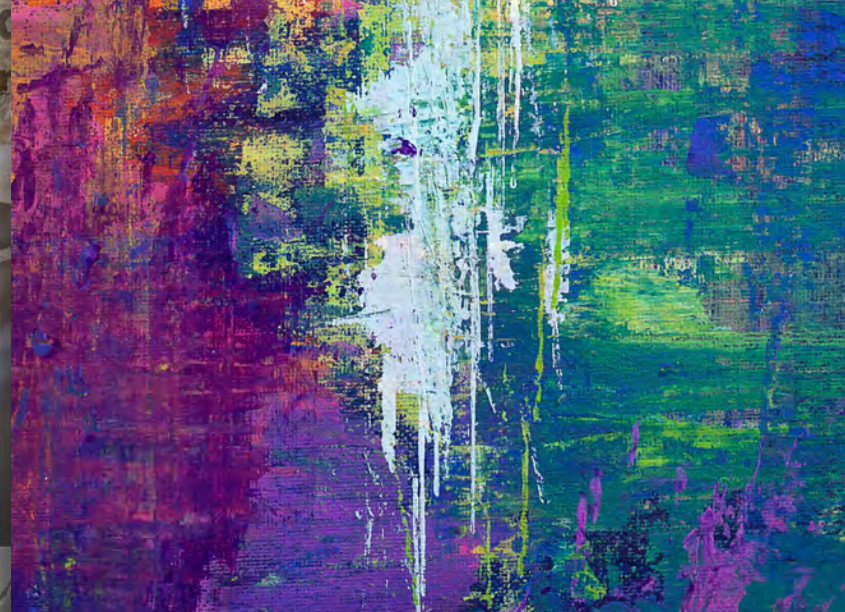
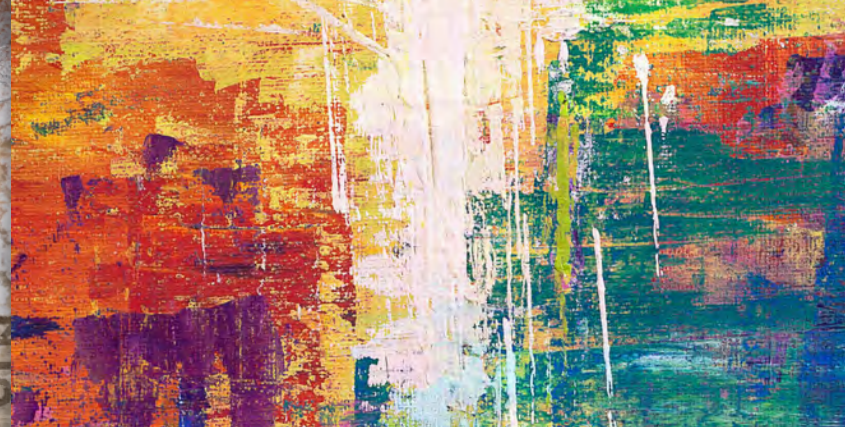


Closing Session

Communion Service

After conversation about Word and Sacrament ministry, close the group by sharing communion together. Invite a local pastor, if there is not one in the group, who can preside.

Note: this closing session is optional





Logistics

related to pursuing
rostered leadership
in the ELCA

Where do I start?

Maybe these sections on vocation, discernment, and ministry have sparked curiosity or stirred something in you—or in members of your group if you’ve been doing this work together. Or perhaps you’re simply interested in digging more deeply into faith and learning more.

There are many ways to explore theological education, even if you’re not certain where it might lead. The following pages offer some basic starting points for further theological study, including pathways toward rostered ministry.



being attentive to our faith and spiritual growth, which is a lifelong, intentional process. Regular participation in worship, prayer, service to neighbor and creation, and meaningful relationships can support discernment and ongoing faith formation.

Another place with resources pertaining to ways you can serve is the [ELCA leadership website](#). There you'll find resources related to leadership opportunities, theological education, scholarships, and a variety of ministries.

Thinking About Rostered Leadership

Where to Start?

Connecting with your local Synod office is a good start

The ELCA is divided into 9 regions and 65 synods. Reaching out and connecting with the local synod office is a good start. One of the staff members in the synod office is responsible for overseeing candidacy and they will be a good initial conversation partner for you. If you are leading a group and have several participants interested in rostered ministry, perhaps invite someone from the synod staff to attend your gathering (in person or virtually).

I felt and continue to feel a sense of call through prayer and discernment, working with a spiritual director. You cannot serve the spiritual needs of others when you yourself do not talk, trust, and live in God. I lost that in seminary and it needs to be the most important in seminary.

Pr. Wylie Cook | First Lutheran; Lynn, Mass.

Unsure But Curious?

It's ok to start here, too

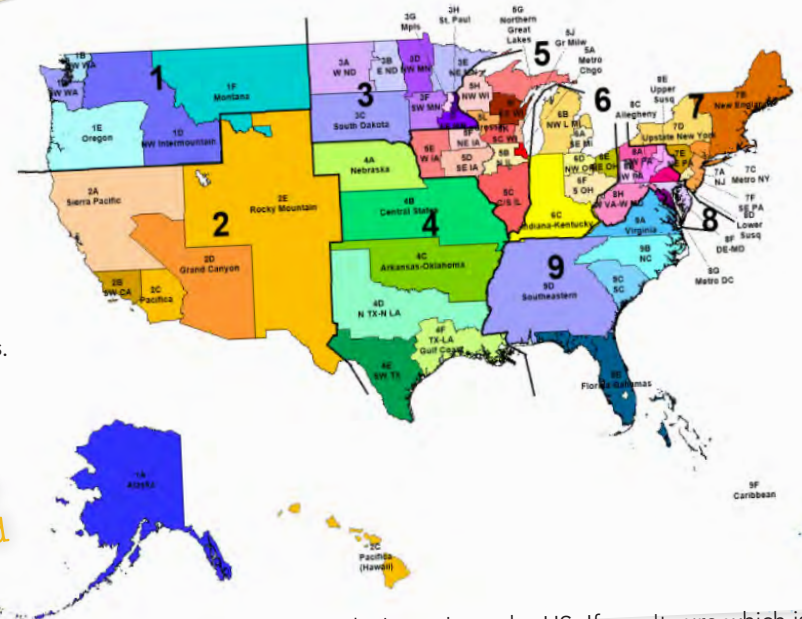
Regardless of your unique call or whether you pursue rostered ministry, remember that all Christians share a vocation to love God and neighbor. This shared vocation requires

You cannot serve the spiritual needs of others when you yourself do not talk, trust, and live in God

Reflection Questions

- What are your ongoing spiritual practices? How do you tend to and nurture your faith?
- What does it mean to you to talk, trust and live in God?

ELCA Regions and Synods



These are ELCA Synods throughout the US. If aren't sure which is yours, this is a helpful reference.¹⁹ You can also [go here to see a larger version of this map](#).



Thinking About Seminary

Where to Start?

research your options

A good place to start is the [ELCA seminaries webpage](#). The ELCA has seven seminaries, and this website will link you to all seven of their homepages. On each homepage, you can find out more about the degree and non-degree programs offered at each institution, seminary specific discernment events, how to visit each campus, financial-aid and scholarship information, and any joint programs the seminaries may be sponsoring together.

When I began seminary, I was not convinced that ordained ministry was for me. During my time working for the ELCA, I found that I loved preaching, having one-on-one conversations with people about their faith, and teaching about my time in Madagascar. So I applied to seminary because I thought it would be a good idea to learn more than what I could find on the internet for preaching and teaching. Ordained ministry ended up becoming my vocation, so my theological education has really enriched that! But even before going the pastor route, I could sense that theological education would enrich my own faith and ability to follow God's call in any vocation.

• *Rev. Katie Elkin Ziehr* | Campus Pastor,
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church and Lutheran
Campus Ministry in Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Reflection Questions



- Are you drawn to further study through theological education? What do you hope to explore?
- What do you see as the value of ongoing theological learning and study?

FACILITATOR SUGGESTION:

The Mentor Exercise and the Anchor/Bridge/Guide Conversations (pg. 68) can be beneficial activities with these sections on rostered leadership.



Pastor Jen Rude currently serves as the University Pastor at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, WA, where she finds joy and meaningful challenge in accompanying students, faculty, and staff in learning and discovery, engaging big enough questions, and listening together for God's call to imagine and practice ways of living that are more rooted in compassion, justice, meaning and purpose. Her other calls have included serving as the program director for Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries and as an Outreach Minister with The Night Ministry in Chicago. In 2007, Jen was extraordinarily ordained at Resurrection Lutheran Church in Chicago and served there as Associate Pastor. After policy change at the national level removed barriers for partnered LGBTQ clergy, Jen was received onto the ELCA roster in 2011. Jen has a Masters of Divinity from Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, CA and a B.A. from Augustana University in Sioux Falls, SD. Outside of work, Jen enjoys walking and running in the neighborhood, podcasts and reading, decluttering, meals with friends, and living in beautiful Tacoma with her spouse Deb Derylak. | **author**



Rev. Sam LaDue serves in a call which combines campus ministry at Stanford University, where she pastors the only queer-affirming progressive Christian community on campus (affectionately known as the "Gay Jesus Group"), with year-round pastoral ministry at University Lutheran Church in Palo Alto, CA. She is a self-proclaimed "joy junkie," finding energy and beauty in creativity and communion. Prior to rostered ministry, Sam served as Director of Communications for San Francisco Night Ministry and as a communications and leadership development professional within a specialized sector of the hospitality industry. Her ministry background includes extensive work in liturgy and music direction in both Roman Catholic and Lutheran contexts. Sam received an MDiv from Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary and an MA in Practical Theology from the GTU, both in Berkeley, CA. She recently had the honor of serving as Artist-in-Residence and liturgist at Holden Village for Queer Renewal: Wilderness & Homecoming. When not pondering the universe and its complexities through mediums such as photography, glitter, and paint, Sam enjoys cycling, hiking, and life with her dog, Crispy. | **design** | www.samrladue.com