

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE FOR ADMISSION TO THE ROSTER OF ORDAINED MINISTERS OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CANADA

Purpose

The Alternative Route for Admission to the Roster of Ordained Ministers in the ELCIC is a special program designed to meet the church's need to provide ordained leadership in specific communities who face difficulty in securing Word and Sacrament ministry through the church's regular call process.

In order to meet these needs, existing lay leaders from within such communities are invited to prepare for ordained service in these settings. The minimum age for such candidates shall normally be 40 years of age or higher. Invitations to the alternative route program are only made in consultation with the community to be served and after there is clear indication that a first call placement will be made available to the applicant.

Step One: Eligibility and Application

Letters of Invitation: The synodical Bishop completes an assessment of eligibility based on the Criteria Checklist and then shall confer with and seek approval to proceed from the Conference of Bishop. The synodical Bishop then sends letters of invitation and a description of the program to both the identified candidate and the congregation(s) to be served. Each is invited to send written notification of their intention to participate in this programme.

Filing an Application: The applicant forwards registration materials to the Synod Committee for Theological Education and Leadership (CTEL) or Candidacy Committee (CCOM).

Psychological Evaluation and Career Consultation: Applicants are expected to complete a psychological evaluation and career consultation as defined in present policies governing ordination.

Step Two: CTEL/CCOM Endorsement

Initial Interview: The Chairperson of CTEL/CCOM will arrange for an Initial Interview.

Applicants are expected to identify an ELCIC seminary where the Basic Theological Education for Ministry requirements will be completed.

Upon review of the registration materials and completion of the initial interview, the CTEL/CCOM decides whether or not to endorse the candidate.

Step Three: Program of Study

In co-operation with the designated ELCIC seminary, the synod CTEL/CCOM direct and advise the candidate on a suitable program of study. The program of study may include some pre-seminary work depending on the assessment of the committee.

Seminaries reserve the right to deny admission to applicants who are unable to meet the necessary academic or financial requirements.

The Basic Theological Education for Ministry program will include a minimum of 30 credit hours (10 classes) and extends over a minimum of one year (2 semesters); it will include the study of Scripture, Christian theology, the Lutheran Confessions, church history, worship, preaching, and the policy and practices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. These are minimum requirements. In consultation with the seminary, the CTEL/CCOM may specify additional requirements.

The seminary residency requirement may be met by either:

- a) A minimum of one year (2 semesters) of residency at a seminary of this church, or
- b) A Theological Education for Emerging Ministry (TEEM) program, as offered through a seminary of this church. The TEEM program includes brief periods of residency class time, along with distance education and mentorship.

In addition candidates will also be required to complete an Internship placement as well as a single unit of Supervised Pastoral Education. In exceptional circumstances, the CTEL/CCOM may waive one or both of these last two requirements.

Step Four: Approval Process

At the completion of the above program of study, the CTEL/CCOM makes its determination regarding the candidate. It may:

- A. Make an immediate recommendation to the Examining Committee.
- B. Make a conditional endorsement specifying further requirements.
- C. Deny endorsement and not recommend to the Examining Committee.

Step Five: Examining Committee, Receipt and Acceptance of Call

Upon successful examination, the candidate shall be open to call.

The synodical Bishop shall then ask the Synod Council to issue a Call to Special Service for service in the congregation(s) identified in the initial application process.

Upon receipt and acceptance of call, the candidate becomes eligible for ordination.

Candidates who have participated in the Alternative Route for Admission to the Roster of Ordained Ministers are not, at any time, eligible to receive calls other than to a synodically issued Call to Special Service.

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Criteria Checklist

The Community to be served:

- Has experienced a lengthy pastoral vacancy that is not able to be filled through regular means. i.e. parish re-alignment, co-operation with Full Communion or LWF partners, long-term interim ministry.
- Is able to provide compensation at a level that allows the rostered minister to participate in the ELCIC Pension and Benefits plan.

The Candidate:

- Shall normally be at least forty years of age.
- Has been identified as a respected leader within the community to be served.
- Is able to meet this church's application requirements for candidates seeking admission to the Roster of Ordained Ministers of this church.
- Is able to meet the entrance requirements of an ELCIC seminary for Basic Theological Education for Ministry.
- Is able and willing to serve according to the terms of call as determined by the synodical bishop in consultation with the community to be served.
- Shall meet the criteria for public ministry within a congregation or other ministry of this church, namely:
 - a. evidence of mature Christian faith and commitment to Christ;
 - b. knowledge and acceptance of the Confession of Faith of this church; and
 - c. willingness to meet this church's expectations concerning the personal conduct and behaviour of persons serving in public ministry.