

Report of the Committee on church Vocations (Candidacy)
Synod Assembly 2023

The process of Candidacy for Rostered Ministry is carried out by the synod's Committee on Church Vocations according to the policies and procedures of the ELCA. The Bishop appoints the synodical committee to attend to the tasks and decisions of the candidacy process and to build relationships of support with our candidates.

Candidacy is a time of discernment and an interdependent process with a sharing of responsibility and accountability among partners: candidates, congregations, the synodical committee, seminaries, and the candidacy staff from Churchwide.

We are blessed in the Northwest Pennsylvania Synod to have a number of candidates in various paths to rostered ministry and who are at various stages of the candidacy journey.

Stephanie R. Chandler, a member of Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kane is a student at United Lutheran, Gettysburg campus. She has completed her first semester, has served as an Assisting Minister, and has written and delivered "my first full sermon" and is looking forward to future growth in the years to come.

Jane C. Miller is a member of Zion, Shannondale. She is participating in the Distance Learning tract through United Lutheran Seminary in Gettysburg. That means that she is able to do her seminary coursework remotely, through online classes. Jane has successfully completed her first year and her ministerial fieldwork. She is presently taking an intensive course on the Philadelphia campus and is hoping to do her CPE in Pittsburgh this fall.

The following persons are preparing for rostered ministry through the TEEM tract. TEEM stands for Theological Education for Emerging Ministries and the process is a bit different than for those who are full time seminary students. TEEM students participate in intensive classroom instruction three or four times a year and they serve in a congregation of the synod at the same time. They are to develop the same competencies as those candidates who are full time seminary students. The Candidacy process is the same for TEEM candidates and full-time seminary candidates.

Those who have been entranced into the TEEM process are:

John A Kearns, a member of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Bradford. John has completed nearly all of his coursework, has participated successfully in CPE, (Clinical Pastoral Education), and had been endorsed by the Vocations Committee. John will enter into Internship when his final courses are completed.

Kevin R. Schafer, a member of Maria Lutheran Church, Dagus Mines, is preparing for internship, having completed coursework and CPE this past spring. He received his TEEM certificate from United Lutheran Seminary in May.

Michael K. Snider is a member of Luther Memorial, Erie. Michael is an Authorized Lay Worship Leader in the synod, has completed several courses, and participated in CPE. He is preparing for Endorsement this summer.

Roland D. (Ron) King is a member of Luther Memorial, Erie. Several years ago he took several courses in preparation for rostered ministry that were offered by Bishop Jones. Ron has been an Authorized Lay Worship leader and a Pastoral Assistant for many years. He participated with the TEEM cohort in Clinical Pastoral Education this past semester. Ron has served in a very creative ministry at Holy Trinity, Erie.

Rev. Doug Dyson is a United Methodist pastor who is serving on Bishop Lozano's staff. Pastor Dyson has asked to be rostered in the ELCA. He is to follow the candidacy process too. He has met with a Theological Review Panel who has helped him plan the path to accomplish that and he participated in the CPE cohort. In addition Pr. Dyson is working on a DMin degree. He is looking forward to final approval during this year.

On behalf of Bishop Lozano, I express our gratitude to the Committee members who served during 2022-2023 term: The Rev Dr. Martin Zimmann (our representative from ULS); Rev. Rebecca Resch, the ELCA Candidacy and Leadership Manager for Regions 7 and 8; Rev. Randall Frenz (chaplain at Bethesda Lutheran Services in Meadville); Andrew Godinich,(Good Hope, Oil City);) and Nicholas Barber (St Paul's, Erie). We appreciate your service and are grateful for the support you provide to our candidates through their preparation for rostered ministry.

We have two vacancies on the committee for Lay women. If you feel God calling you to serve in this way, please speak to Bishop Lozano.

I also wish to thank Bishop Lozano for all of the support and encouragement he has provided in this past year. Pr. Sandra Jones retired from this position and Bishop delegated the position to me. I have been a stressed-out chairperson, but his patience and encouragement, and Pr. Becky's guidance has helped me to relax and do the job as they seemed to know that I could. Please continue to pray for all of our candidates as they navigate through the process called Candidacy. May I even suggest that you include them weekly in the Prayers of Intercession as you worship. Thanks be to God for all the spectacular things God has done in each of our lives.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Karen Thompson

[The Rev. Karen Thompson

Chairperson, Committee on Church Vocations (Candidacy)