

- a. an ability to engage culture and context theologically, critically, and creatively with a sensitivity to historical factors;
  - b. analysis of community demographics and trends;
  - c. engagement with complex social and religious issues as a practical theologian in context;
  - d. sensitivity to cross-cultural, intra-cultural, and countercultural dynamics; and
  - e. skill in addressing cultural differences.
3. **Equips and sends disciples into the world.** A rostered minister prepares disciples to discern the leading of the Spirit as they share the gospel with neighbors in word and deed. Some important considerations for this competency are:
- a. demonstrated capacity to mobilize people of faith with different gifts and perspectives who can enrich the church's witness in the world and lead to acts of mercy and justice,
  - b. personal embodiment of the Christian faith in one's daily life,
  - c. demonstrated capacity for cultivating communities of well-being and holistic stewardship as illustrated in the Wholeness Wheel (section 4.1.2),
  - d. theological sensitivity to the presence and activity of God in the world,
  - e. recognition of the public vocation of the Christian community in the world, and
  - f. ability to interpret that vocation to people of faith.

Because this is a time of unprecedented change and increasing diversity, not all ministry contexts will have the same imagination for mission and ministry. The church, therefore, needs adaptive leaders with demonstrated abilities for appreciating and celebrating different orientations toward mission, fostering positive relationships within a context, and moving together with others toward a common vision for mission. Adaptive leaders are prepared to undertake ministry in a variety of locations and to assist a community in developing a common life that participates more fully in God's mission in the world. The church acknowledges that a rostered minister's adaptive leadership skills, reflecting the cited competencies, will not be fully formed during the candidacy process. A well-prepared missional candidate understands that the candidacy process is the beginning of a lifelong process of learning and formation for leadership.

## ***2.2 Ministers of Word and Sacrament***

### **2.2.1 Definition of Roster**

A minister of Word and Sacrament of this church shall be a person whose commitment to Christ, soundness in the faith, educational qualifications, and aptness to preach, teach, witness, and celebrate the sacraments have been examined and approved in the manner prescribed in the documents of this church; who has been properly called and ordained; who accepts and adheres to the Confession of Faith of this church; who is diligent and faithful in the exercise of the ministry; and whose life and conduct are above reproach. A minister of Word and Sacrament shall comply with this church's *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions* (ELCA Constitution 7.20).

### **2.2.2 Standards for Ministers of Word and Sacrament**

Persons admitted to the ministry of Word and Sacrament of this church shall satisfactorily demonstrate leadership abilities and an understanding of the four principles (We Are Church, We Are Lutheran, We Are Church Together, We Are Church for the Sake of the World), and the competencies (section 2.1). In addition, persons approved and rostered as ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church will satisfactorily meet and maintain the following as defined by this church's *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions* in policies developed by the appropriate churchwide home area, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

1. commitment to Christ,
2. acceptance of and adherence to the Confession of Faith of this church,

3. academic and practical qualifications for ministry,
4. 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,
5. receipt and acceptance of a letter of call, and
6. membership in a congregation of this church.

Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA Constitution 7.31.02), every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:

1. preach the word;
2. administer the sacraments;
3. conduct public worship;
4. provide pastoral care;
5. seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the gospel;
6. impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications;
7. witness to the kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; and
8. speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.

Each minister of Word and Sacrament with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:

1. offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
2. supervise all schools and organizations of the congregation;
3. impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications;
4. endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization and synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
5. install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
6. with the council, administer discipline.

### **2.2.3 Theological Preparation**

Candidates preparing for the ministry of Word and Sacrament must engage in a comprehensive program of preparation that will help them develop the competencies for ministry outlined in section 2.1. Theological preparation includes:

1. theological education leading to a Master of Divinity degree from an accredited seminary or a Certificate of Completion for TEEM,
2. theological and practical formation for ministry,
3. one unit of Supervised Clinical Ministry (section 4.5.1), and
4. internship consisting of 2,000 contact hours supervised by an ELCA seminary (Appendix F).

## ***2.3 Ministers of Word and Service***

### **2.3.1 Definition of Roster**

Ministers of Word and Service provide a ministry exemplifying the life of Christlike service to all persons and creation: nurturing, healing, leading, advocating dignity and justice, and equipping the whole people of God for their life of witness and service within and beyond the congregation for the sake of God's mission in the world. A minister of Word and Service shall comply with this church's *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions*.

### **2.3.2 Standards for Ministers of Word and Service**

Persons admitted to the ministry of Word and Service of this church will satisfactorily demonstrate

leadership abilities and an understanding of the four principles (We Are Church, We Are Lutheran, We Are Church Together, We Are Church for the Sake of the World) and the competencies (section 2.1). In addition, persons approved and rostered as ministers of Word and Service of this church will satisfactorily meet and maintain the following as defined by this church's *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions* in policies developed by the appropriate churchwide home area, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA Constitution 7.50):

1. commitment to Christ,
2. acceptance of and adherence to the Confession of Faith of this church,
3. willingness and ability to serve in response to the needs of this church and world,
4. academic and practical qualifications for ministry,
5. 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,
6. receipt and acceptance of a letter of call, and
7. membership in a congregation of this church.

Responsibilities of ministers of Word and Service consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will include:

1. being rooted in the word of God, for proclamation and service;
2. advocating a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;
3. speaking publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice in and proclaiming God's love for the world, and witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad;
4. equipping the baptized for ministry in God's world that affirms the gifts of all people;
5. encouraging mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;
6. practicing stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents, and resources;
7. sharing knowledge of the ELCA and its wider ministry of the gospel, and advocating for the work of all expressions of this church; and
8. identifying and encouraging qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.

In preparation to serve as an ELCA deacon, a candidate is required to engage in a comprehensive program of preparation, which includes theological education, training in an area of specialization, formation for ministry, and contextual education. While a minimum of one area of specialization is expected, a candidate may be called to serve in a position with a broad position description.

### **2.3.3 Theological Preparation**

The educational norm for the Word and Service roster will be a theological master's degree from an accredited seminary or equivalencies granted by a Competencies Assessment Panel for Word and Service Candidates (CAP), convened by a candidacy staff person in the Christian Community and Leadership home area.

Consideration may be given for prior experiences, education, or a master's degree in the field of specialization. The [Competencies Assessment Panel Report for Word and Service Candidates \(CAP\) form](#).

Candidates will be prepared to do the following:

1. articulate with a Lutheran ecumenical voice the word of God in and for a hurting world, using the fruits of biblical, historical, and theological study;
2. carry out a particular service on behalf of the church with credibility in the world;

3. equip the baptized for faithful ministry in the world and in the church;
4. participate in formation leading to the ability to articulate and act out a vision of diakonia that addresses human need;
5. successfully complete one unit of supervised clinical ministry (section 4.5.1);and
6. successfully complete an internship supervised by an ELCA seminary (AppendixF).

### 2.3.4 Specialization

The ELCA has identified a need to provide for a variety of ministries in congregations and other settings where theologically trained leaders serve. While the forms of ministry might be different, there are common areas of specialization, focus, and need throughout this church. A call might include many varied responsibilities, but a minister of Word and Service must focus on at least one area of specialization during the candidacy process.

The list below provides categories in which leaders may have strengths or have demonstrated competency. The list is not exhaustive but rather is descriptive of a variety of areas in which a minister of Word and Service might develop expertise or interest.

Administration	Ecumenical Ministry	Outdoor Ministry/Camping
Campus Ministry	Evangelism	Public Policy/Advocacy/Social Justice
Chaplaincy	Faith Formation	Ministry With Older Adults
Community Organizing	Global Ministry	Social Services
Cooperative Ministry	Health Ministry	Spiritual Formation/Direction
Counseling/Social Work	Intergenerational Ministry	Youth and Household
Education	Music and Worship	

Professional licensure or certification, whenever normative, is required.

### 2.3.5 Competencies Assessment Panel Report for Word and Service Candidates (CAP)

The Competencies Assessment Panel Report for Word and Service Candidates (CAP) may be used when a candidate enters the candidacy process with a master's degree or experience in a field to assess what equivalencies the candidate brings to the process as well as what other classes or experiences the candidate may need in order to serve as a Minister of Word and Service. A member of the DM Candidacy staff follows up a candidate's Entrance decision to assure that a Competencies Assessment Panel Report for Word and Service Candidates is convened. Electronic technology may be used to convene a CAP. The primary responsibility of a CAP is to assess a candidate's knowledge and leadership abilities in each of the competency areas. In conversation with a candidate, a CAP will identify the academic work or other training needed to strengthen the candidate's ministry skills. The panel makes a recommendation for Endorsement or Approval but does not have authority to reverse a candidacy committee's decision. If the panel's recommendation is for immediate Approval, the panel will fill out form D. If additional work is needed, the panel will meet again and complete form D after the candidate completes the required work.

A CAP normally includes the following: the seminary faculty representative who may be a TEEM director, a candidacy committee member, a DM candidacy staff person, and a member from the appropriate ethnic community, if applicable.