

Candidacy Sub-Committee Report to Synod 2020

This past year, the Candidacy Sub-Committee has continued its work of assisting candidates for Rostered Ministry as they work through the discernment process. Candidacy materials continue to be up-dated to address the two rosters of the ELCA— Word and Sacrament ministers and Word and Service ministers. *“It is a tremendously important and revitalizing work that is done by those serving to enable the Candidacy processes of the ELCA in the Church-Wide expression of this Church. The work that is done there then flows out to the Regions, Synods and Seminaries of the ELCA. “As a Church, we are very fortunate to have a history of forging healthy co-operative relationships between the above listed partners that enables creative ways to work with policy changes that are developing and likewise to work with candidates for rostered ministry in the Church. This is being accomplished with a focus on the ministry and life of the Church in the 21st century reality of the United States of America and that of the world’s many nations. More and more the gifts of mutual ministry will be critical if the Gospel of Jesus Christ is to be a formative factor in the lives of God’s human creatures for the love of whom he sacrificed all.”* The foregoing quote from last year’s report to the Assembly is a continuing reality. That is especially true as the Seminaries and the ELCA work to expand the pathways by which Candidacy processes are developed to meet the needs of the Church and of those discerning a Call to Rostered Ministry. Following are the various ways in which ELCA Candidacy partners are exploring alternate pathways to approved service on our ministry rosters.

The above, as I wrote in the 2019 Report to the Synod Assembly, is still applicable for 2020, with one striking difference. We have since early March of 2020 entered a new adventure known as the Covid19 pandemic. The ELCA has had to find new ways of being the Church with restrictions on assembly, working arrangements and meetings of various groups that are charged with carrying forward the ministry given to us by our Lord. This is true for the Candidacy Sub-Committee as well. Thanks to the Technological skills of our Synod staff as represented by the competent work of Deacon Karin Grady, Candidacy has been able to do our work by Zoom meetings. It has been remarkably interesting to experience the process of Candidacy via computer screen. The members of this sub-committee, with the guidance of Deacon Erdmann and her ability to identify the needed materials and persons to assist in the work of Candidacy, have been able to be present for those members of the NIS working toward Rostered Ministry. The younger of our candidates have taken to this technical challenge like it was “Child’s Play” They have navigated the changes brought to the rigors of seminary education very well and seem very much at home when dealing with their Candidacy Committee. It is the consensus of all concerned that we are most grateful for the gifts that have been provided to us through technology.

In the beginning months of 2020, there were 21 Candidates for whom the Sub-Committee held responsibility. Since then, 6 of these candidates have been approved for service as Rostered ministers. One of these has received and accepted a call while an additional 4

have received assignment to synods for Call consideration. Sadly, one candidate has died. As sisters and brothers, we offer our condolences and prayers to this candidate's family as they find their way along the path of grief that is before them.

It was noted in last year's report that we have a new process for determining terms for Sub-Committee members' service. As presented, the plan would be phased in so that committee members will be eligible for appointment to serve a 4-year term on the Sub-Committee with the possibility of one additional 4-year term appointment. During the phase-in period, there will be the opportunity to evaluate this plan in terms of training members to meet the complexities of Candidacy service and then being able to use the skills for serving. It is both a great responsibility and tremendous joy to be a partner in the discernment of qualified leadership for Rostered Ministry. Following is a list of the current members / participants of the Candidacy Sub-Committee: Pr. Tammy Anderson, Mr. Richard Brynteson, Dn. Cheryl Erdmann (Assistant to the Bishop), Pr. Raket Evenson, Pr. Ken Gibson, Ms. Ann James, Pr. Rob Kinnear, Pr. Doug Liston, Pr. Jay Quinn, Mr. Ken Reinhardt, Dn. Shari Trotter, Prof. Peter Vethanayamony (Seminary Representative), Pr. Terrie Wilder, Bishop Jeff Clements and Pr. Ramie Bakken (Region 5 Candidacy and Missional Leadership Manager, ELCA). To these servants, the Seminaries, Ministry in Context mentors, Intern Supervisors and the Candidacy staff of the ELCA I express my gratitude for the blessing of our shared ministry.

As I write, I'm aware of a hymn that may be used in worship during Ordinary Time in which we find ourselves. The title of the song is "You are the Seed". The writer reminds all of us that we are the seed which is planted for the growth of the Kingdom. I am aware that individual members and congregations are the seed from which the Lord grows those who are called to serve as candidates for and then as Rostered ministers of The Church. One of those seeds, for which I personally am grateful, is my Godmother who continues as a faithful disciple of Jesus at the age of 103. I am grateful to her and all of you who are the seed and also the tender of the seeds from which candidates come forth. Rich Blessings to each and all of you.

Respectfully, *Pr. Rob Kinnear*, Candidacy Sub-Committee Chair