

Intern Committee Manual

2012-2013 Edition

**The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg
The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia
The Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary**

INTRODUCTION

WELCOME!

- ... to a task as simple, yet awesome, as helping someone grow;
- ... to the challenge of assisting a future pastor prepare for effective pastoral ministry;
- ... to the venture of using your faith, love, sensitivity, courage, patience and loyalty in a very personal, very practical ministry of the Church;
- ... to a careful review of this booklet prepared by the Lutheran Theological Seminaries at Gettysburg, Philadelphia, and Columbia, South Carolina.

Internship joins the faith and efforts of many people in a cooperative educational venture on behalf of the Church and its ministry. Each future pastor will, in the course of her or his ministry, touch hundreds, perhaps thousands of lives. Like a stone dropped in a pond, your efforts will ripple out far beyond the boundaries of this one-year of internship.

The Internship Committee Manual is designed to help you in this vital ministry. The manual is addressed to: ministers-in-training (seminary interns and rising interns), congregations and their internship committees, and pastor/supervisors in the field.

Since seminarians of churches other than Lutheran participate in our internship program, Lutheran references have been kept to a minimum.

Our sincere thanks for your time, energy and faithful service.

The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg
The Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary
The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia

THE INTERN PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

The intern program of the Eastern Cluster of ELCA Seminaries provides the student with a supervised learning experience in the work of ordained ministry within the context of a congregation or an appropriate agency or institution. An integral part of the Master of Divinity four-year degree program, internship is also a prerequisite for ordination by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

After the first two years of the curriculum, the seminarian normally enters the internship program and receives credit for satisfactory completion of the program. Grading is on a pass/fail basis. The intern year, which usually begins in the summer, continues for 12 months and includes two weeks of vacation-which includes 2 Sundays. Under exceptional circumstances, minor alterations may be approved by the seminary (e.g., some internships are for nine or ten months).

Alternatives to the third-year internship or parish context are granted by the faculty upon the recommendation of the Contextual Education Committee. We are sensitive to the varying needs of persons under the care of denominations other than the ELCA.

SUPERVISED EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The intern is most accurately described as a minister-in-training. He or she functions as an assistant to the pastor. **Two basic goals of internship are:**

1. To acquire skills, experiences, and perspectives appropriate to pastoral competence, and
2. To attain increased integration of personal identity with an emerging pastoral identity.

Under the supervision of a pastor/supervisor, the seminarian achieves these goals as he/she ministers to individuals, to the congregation, and to the community at large. During the course of the internship, as well as at its end, the pastor/supervisor and members of the lay committee will provide evaluation.

The intern has primary responsibility for the quality of the internship experience, whereas the congregation provides the learning situation. An internship committee made up of five to seven members of the congregation gives feedback to the intern regularly through the year. The intern, pastor/supervisor, and congregational internship committee formulate and monitor a learning covenant that identifies the intern's learning goals and the resources available for meeting them. The Director of Internship consults with the pastor/supervisor, the intern, and the committee about the progress and difficulties encountered in the internship.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INTERN

During the internship year, the intern is expected to fulfill these responsibilities:

- * Serve full-time in the congregation or internship center unless other arrangements are agreed upon at the beginning of the internship.
- * Develop an effective working relationship with the pastor/supervisor, carrying out the assignments given, and functioning as an adjunct to and primary support of the pastor.
- * Reflect theologically and pastorally upon the internship activities and functions with the pastor/supervisor.
- * Deepen one's own devotional life and develop the insights and wisdom integral to effective ministry.
- * Conduct himself/herself at all times in a manner befitting one preparing for the office of ministry.
- * Provide health insurance for self and family. (The congregation is encouraged to pay the premium.)
- * File promptly such reports of work and progress as may be required by the seminary, the congregation or agency, and the synod, including the learning covenant and the evaluation-feedback material.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PASTOR AND CONGREGATION

Throughout the internship, the seminarian engages in the full range of ministerial work using the program and resources of the congregation as the experiential context. Only two exceptions limit this range: the intern shall not preside at Holy Communion and shall not perform marriages. The pastor/supervisor and the congregation or agency, give the intern opportunities to participate in and observe as many aspects of pastoral responsibility as are feasible. These functions include the following:

Worship

- * Leadership in worship and preaching. The intern will normally have the opportunity to preach at least 12 times or more during the year. These opportunities may be provided in other than Sunday services.
- * Experiencing the evaluation of at least one sermon each quarter by a group of representative worshipers (usually this committee).
- * Observing and/or assisting the pastor in pastoral acts such as weddings, funerals, baptisms, and private communions.

Pastoral Care

- * Visiting members, prospective members, the sick, the aged, the imprisoned, etc.
- * Ministering to the bereaved.
- * Counseling with youth, the sick, the aged in normal situations, many of which will grow out of relationships established in the intern's assigned responsibilities.

Education

- * Teaching at least one class in one of the congregation's educational agencies.
- * Becoming familiar with the administration of the entire educational program of the congregation.

Evangelism

- * Participating in the evangelism program of the congregation and its general administrative activities.

Social Ministry

- * Observing and participating in the social ministry program of the congregation.
- * Observing and participating in social action in the community or society in which the congregation is located.

Stewardship

- * Participating in the stewardship program of the congregation and its general administrative activities. (For the purposes of financial giving, the intern is considered a member.)

Parish Administration

- * Attending the meetings of congregational organizations and/or committees and assuming staff responsibility for one of these under the pastor's guidance.
- * Observing the general pastoral administration of the parish and the church office.

Involvement within the larger Christian Community

- * Attending some pastoral conferences and/or synodical meetings.
- * Attending group meetings and training sessions for interns sponsored by one of the ELCA seminaries. The congregation is normally expected to provide travel and living expenses away from home.

THE INTERNSHIP COMMITTEE

The congregation's Internship Committee aims to assist a seminarian to become better prepared for effective pastoral ministry. The Internship Committee usually consists of five to seven members who are familiar with various aspects of life and work of the congregation.

Committee members are invited to the venture of using their faith, love, sensitivity, courage, patience, and loyalty in a personal, practical ministry of the church.

That practical personal ministry begins with welcoming the intern to your Christian community. It continues by engaging regularly with the intern in **three** functional ways.

First, the Internship Committee consults with the intern in the formulation of the Learning Covenant. Committee members can identify resources and opportunities for learning that are available in the congregation. They also communicate their impressions of the intern's needs for growth and assess a priority of order to meet congregational needs effectively.

The second function is to give feedback to the intern about the way in which his/her ministry is experienced. The members of the committee represent a variety of personalities and will experience the intern's ministry from different perspectives. This variety is important, for it is a way in which the intern can learn to deal with the variety of feedback that certainly will be received from this and other congregations which may be served later as a pastor. The evaluation-feedback section of this manual provides guidelines for the active participation of the committee in the evaluation-feedback process.

The third function of the Internship Committee (together with the pastor/supervisor) is to advise the seminary and the synodical Candidacy Committee (or its equivalent) on areas of personal life and skills in pastoral work which require extra attention during the intern's final year of preparation for ordination. Sometimes these will be areas of strength that need to be consolidated and built upon. Sometimes these will be areas of weakness in which there is a need for further growth and development if the intern is to be ready to serve a first-call congregation in an acceptable manner. Such advice is reviewed in a final evaluatory conference on campus at the end of internship. The agenda is normally the summary of the year reports written by the pastor/supervisor and by the intern, along with the intern's summaries of the internship committee's feedback regarding progress toward achieving the goals of the Learning Covenant.

In addition, the pastor and four members of the congregation may be asked by one of our cluster seminaries to fill out a brief check list as part of the Association of Theological Schools Profiles of Ministry project.

The above three functions are achieved as the committee and intern interact throughout the year.

QUESTIONS MOST OFTEN ASKED BY MEMBERS OF CONGREGATIONAL INTERNSHIP COMMITTEES

What's expected of us?

It's hard to detail everything that love does when love sees needs. But let's start with these:

- * **Befriend** the intern in ways that are supportive, helpful and encouraging.
- * **Reveal** and disclose information the intern could use to relate better to the congregation and community.
- * **Evaluate** the way in which you see the intern's ministry being perceived and received.
- * **Interpret** to the congregation the role and functions of the intern.
- * **Attend** faithfully and participate fully in all meetings and activities of the Internship Committee.
- * **Support** needed changes in the internship program as may be determined through consultations involving also the supervising pastor and intern.

Who are we anyway?

Hopefully, a cross-section of congregational members in terms of age, sex, background, education, length of membership in the congregation, Christian maturity, sanctified good judgment, and present involvement in a broad range of congregational activities. We prefer a heterogeneous group, though one united in their love for the Lord and in their desire to be of effective service through membership on this committee. If one or more have had experience in some type of personnel work or guidance counseling, so much the better.

Five to seven congregational members is about the right number. Additionally, the intern should be regarded as a member. It is recommended that the supervising pastor and intern's spouse not serve as a member of this lay committee, although they may be invited to attend from time to time.

Who chose us?

That will vary from congregation to congregation. Some church councils or executive committees take initiatives to appoint all the members, including a chairperson. Occasionally groups such as the women, youth, and church council will wish to elect their representative to the committee. The supervising pastor often has several helpful nominations. At times, the final one or two members may be nominated by the intern as persons with whom the intern and spouse felt an immediate, understandable rapport. Most importantly, whatever the method of selection, dare to believe that the Lord of the Church has called YOU because what is needed on this committee, among other things, is something only YOU can provide--the gift of yourself in loving helpfulness.

How often do we meet?

Our experience in monitoring Internship Committees through the years reveals that monthly meetings provide the best opportunity for continuity and a sense of community in which helpful sharing can take place. Normally, the committee should meet at least once before the intern arrives to assist in making ready for the arrival (especially the housing and office facilities) and planning some useful orientation events.

Are we to supervise the intern?

No, the seminary looks to the pastor/supervisor to provide supervisory guidance. The intern should be accountable to no more than one person. The committee's sharing are supplemental inputs, not supervisory directives, unless the pastor has specifically requested the committee's assistance in supervisory matters. Occasionally, committee members have felt strongly that changes need to be made in the supervisory relationship and have taken appropriate initiatives with the pastor and intern to review

the situation. It is most important that open, clear lines of communication be kept with the pastor whenever committee members feel moved to become advocates for changes in the work patterns or behavior of the intern.

How can we feel confident in our role as evaluators and loving critic?

Ministry is to, for, and among the people of God. You are the expert in what **you** believe your needs and concerns to be, in how **you** feel about the intern's learning and serving, and in how **you** perceive the intern's ministry to be going. Share that. Ministry, to be effective, must be contextualized-customized to fit the place, the people, the times. You can and need to report your perspective on how that is being done.

Remember that growth requires both caring affirmation and loving criticism. Don't be overly concerned that you personally may become too harsh or severe in your comments. Trust the fellow members of the committee and your intern to assist in balancing strokes and pokes in a blend that helps. Don't make the mistake of believing that others must agree with you for your observation to be valid. We desire a mix of persons so that we get a mix of perspectives also. Whenever there are tension points among committee members or with the intern, discuss the issues until clarity, not necessarily unanimity, is achieved. It may be constructive to disagree at times if one can avoid being disagreeable in the process.

Do we have to make any written reports?

Yes, we do have two times during the year when the committee fills out evaluations: One about six or seven months into the internship whereby *each* committee member fills out their own evaluation, and one at the end of the internship whereby one committee report is compiled. [Supervisors and Interns fill out a quarterly report at the 1st and an optional 3rd quarter evaluation, but not the committee] Once the evaluations are completed, a discussion between the committee and the intern takes place regarding the evaluations. After discussion has taken place, the evaluations are signed by the intern, pastor/supervisor, and committee chair. The evaluations are then mailed to the Director of Internship. Since we know that it is difficult for many committee members to register their evaluations in writing, we give you double thanks in advance for your needed and appreciated helpfulness in this regard.

Who is to set the agenda for our committee meetings?

We expect the intern to take major initiatives in learning how to work with this group of persons as resources for learning. The intern and committee chairperson should propose an agenda that is responsive both to the intern's concerns as well as those of the committee members. The proposed agenda ought always to be subject to amendment if and when you as an individual member believe that some issue not scheduled deserves priority attention. (For some suggestions for each month's agenda, see next page, "Proposed Agenda")

We have found very valuable the use of case material, normally one page in length, written and distributed by the intern to the committee members in advance of the meeting. Confidentiality must be guarded, but there is no substitute for the intern's own experiences in ministry as the focal point for his/her learning. Responses of the committee members will be informed by their own life experiences, their convictions and their knowledge of the community, its history and its mores. The discussions are usually lively and instructive.

Should the supervising pastor be present at our committee meetings?

Our counsel is "normally not." It's too easy for both intern and committee members to relinquish responsibility for making things happen. Occasional drop-in visits by the pastor are sufficient to demonstrate his/her support. Some committees deem it important to have the pastor's presence to assist with committee orientation early in the year and at other times specifically request the pastor's guidance during the discussion of particular agenda items when they believe that to be advisable.

How long should our terms of service be on the committee?

An internship normally lasts for 12 months. Ideally, committee members should commit themselves for the entire period of an intern's service even though the congregation's term of a committee year may not be synchronized. When congregations continue in the program for another year, our counsel is that a new committee should be named. However, to provide some helpful continuity, up to one-third of the members may be

invited to continue serving for a second year. Rarely should anyone serve more than two consecutive years.

Why does the morale and fun-level of internship committee members tend to be higher than for many other committees in the church?

It happens frequently, all around the country. We are pleased and not wholly able to explain why that seems to be so. We have observed that often a very close sense of community develops as members share themselves in deeply personal ways. The comments, counsel, and caring of all are appreciated. Often you see prompt and significant results from your positive nudging and loving helpfulness. You are loved and respected for who you are. Here you are expected to give your honest reactions. Joys and happiness are celebrated; disappointments and anger get processed. The committee can become a mini-exhibit of what life in a redemptive fellowship is like.

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS FOR INTERNSHIP COMMITTEES

Proposed Items for the First Month's Agenda

1. **Pray** for the Holy Spirit's guidance toward shaping the committee into a caring community and working assembly.
2. **Inquire** about the adequacy of the intern's housing, office arrangement, transportation, and present cash flow.
3. If the intern is married, **focus** some attention upon the spouse--her/his adjustment to the move, settling into the new community, locations of employment (if desired), etc.
4. **Determine** what orientation assistance the committee members might still provide.
5. **Spend** some time getting acquainted. Hear the intern's and spouse's life-stories and then share highlights of your own life story, including especially the history of your participation in this congregation.
6. Make sure each committee member has a copy of The Internship Committee Manual and **agrees** to read it through.

Proposed Items for the Second Month's Agenda

1. **Pray** for the Lord's blessings of openness, friendliness, and unconditional love.
2. **Review the intern's Learning Covenant** which should be completed by now.
3. **Start sharing** with the intern feedback on the intern's worship leadership, scripture reading, public praying, and the like. Defer sermon assessment until the next meeting.

Proposed Items for the Third Month's Agenda

1. During the month of Thanksgiving, **begin** with a round of thank-you prayers specifically related to the internship program in this context.
2. By the third month, the illusions surrounding the honeymoon phase of the internship begin to subside. **Explore** together two major disillusionments the intern has experienced to date. Do this with case examples, pre-prepared and distributed in advance of the meeting by the intern. Do not stop with the negative. Ask how the intern is handling the matters. **Share** how you have handled similar events in your lives.
3. Do a swift, first-quarter over-all evaluation, attempting to balance affirmation with needed nudges for growth.

Proposed Items for the Fourth Month's Agenda

1. **Invite** a member to lead in opening devotions. The Coming of Christ is a natural theme.
2. During this month when we observe the incarnation of our Lord, share together your impressions of how fully the intern has entered the arena of this congregation and community and feels at home there. **Point out** possible community involvement -- local government, law enforcement, school system, social service agencies, and other institutions that touch the lives of members of the congregation. Also **inquire** about the intern's concern with some of the larger social issues of the day.
3. Plan to spend some time evaluating the intern's skills at your next meeting. Discover who has observed the intern teaching and decide who shall monitor it additionally--when and how. Be ready to report at the next meeting.
4. With one-third of the internship year past, spend some time evaluating the effectiveness of this committee's functioning. What have been the

strengths for which we congratulate ourselves? In what major ways ought we to improve in order to be more effective in the ministry of this committee?

Proposed Items for the Fifth Month's Agenda

1. **Invite** a member to lead in opening devotions. Mission outreach or the manifestation of Christ in your life could guide the sharing.
2. Spend a major block of time assessing the intern's teaching skills. **Invite** the intern's self-assessment by means of case material from his/her teaching experience in the congregation. Hear evaluative reports. **Make positive suggestions** for improvement. Identify some sources and personnel which the intern might find useful. (You may wish to invite the pastor to be present during part or all of this agenda item.)
3. Alert committee members that the next meeting will mark the half-way point of the internship, and the progress of the intern to that point will be reviewed. **Remind** all to be especially attentive to areas of the intern's ministry that may not have been topics for group discussion thus far (e.g. youth ministry, visitation/counseling, administration).
4. **Give** some feedback on the ways in which the intern's preaching has improved.

Proposed Items for the Sixth Month's Agenda

1. **Invite** a member to lead in opening devotions.
2. Ask the intern to give his/her mid-year assessment. **Listen** for possible human tendencies to distort by over-emphasizing faults or ignoring them by over-emphasizing gifts or ignoring them.
3. Ask each committee member to share his/her own mid-year evaluations of the intern. **Seek balance and wholeness** to help the intern see more clearly his/her own strengths and weaknesses.
4. **Invite** the intern's spouse (if married) to share his/her impressions as well.
"I am most aware of my spouse's growth in..."
"I believe my spouse's growth could be aided significantly if..."

Proposed Items for the Seventh Month's Agenda

1. **Invite** the intern to share a meditation.
2. **Hand out** the Mid-Year Evaluation forms to each committee member to work on or work directly from the ELCA's web-site for these forms.
***See instructions at the end of this booklet .**
3. **Ask** if there are any second thoughts about the mid-year comments made last month -- any unfinished business.
4. **Invite** the intern to share any updating that has occurred in relation to his/her Learning Covenant.
5. **Assess** the intern's rationale for and record of doing home visits. Do this by means of case material presented by the intern. No gossip, please. Spend some time trying to determine what priority this should have in ministry today.
6. If your intern is married and you haven't made comments to date on your perception of the spouse's supportiveness of the intern's ministry, are conditions right for doing that now?

Proposed Items for the Eighth Month's Agenda

1. Spring is in the air. In an opening round of prayer-thoughts, let each one present **thank God** for that blessing of Spring most appreciated by him or her.
2. Remember to give feedback on the intern's last sermon. **Review** the intern's involvement in the Lenten and Easter services.
3. **Review** the Mid-Year Evaluation Forms and give feedback.
4. In what two ways have you seen most dramatic (resurrection-like!) growth in the intern since coming here? Perhaps the intern could respond with questions for clarification and other comments that in the saying will help the person actually hear those good things and, hopefully be blessed in that hearing.

Proposed Items for the Ninth Month's Agenda

1. **Invite** a committee member to lead in opening worship.
2. Before the summer youth activities begin, it's a good time to review the intern's involvement with youth--how effective, how well balanced and responsive to the total youth personality, how supportive of and cooperative

with work done by the youth sponsors and parents. Again, case material from the learner's own youth ministry would give him/her appropriate control over the learning to take place.

3. **Provide** constructive feedback on the intern's last sermon.
4. At this three-quarter juncture, it may again be important to ask how the committee itself is functioning: Faithful attendance, spirited participation, blend of encouragement and nudging, good morale, climate of loving acceptance?

Proposed Items for the Tenth Month's Agenda

1. Perhaps you will want to plan this or the next meeting as a social outing, including other members of your families. **Have fun together!**
2. June is typically the month for Vacation Church School. **Invite** the intern to review his/her involvement in that teaching/learning opportunity.
3. This would be a good time to pose the question implied in earlier reviews: what learning had you as intern hoped to achieve that haven't as yet become realities for you? May we help you structure some specific engagements which would still help you attain your learning goals?

Proposed Items for the eleventh Month's Agenda

1. Talk about the final evaluation which will be completed by the next meeting. Determine what additional surveys or assessments, if any, ought to be done in preparation for the final evaluative review.
2. **Invite** the intern's spouse (if intern is married) to lead in opening prayer (but accept graciously a refusal. You might wish for a praying spouse, whereas Mr. or Mrs. Spouse may have legitimate hesitations about such a public event).
3. Begin talking about going away issues. Recognize the symptoms of grief: denial that the end is coming up so soon, some feelings of sadness and disappointment--maybe depression, anger about unfulfilled expectations, worrisome concern about "did we all do our job?" A case by the intern could highlight the pleasant surprises and unexpected bonuses which were provided by this year together.
4. In discussing the conclusion of the internship process, will there be any going-away events? What transitions or bridge-builders need to be made for the next intern, if there will be one?

Proposed Items for the Twelfth Month's Agenda

1. Ask the Chairperson of the Committee to lead a devotional.
2. Have the committee agree on a final evaluation as completed by the committee chair.
3. **Discuss** the evaluations with the intern.
4. **Invite** the intern's summary assessment of the year. This can be seen as the "exit interview" which can provide improvements for the next intern to come.
5. **Complete** plans for any final, going-away events.
6. **Talk** about the importance of saying "good-bye" and not just "so long." Interns, like leaving pastors, are professionally bound to leave to avoid unprofessional effects on a successor and the ministry which is left behind.

RESOURCES FOR SUPERVISION AND LEARNING IN THE CONGREGATION

The internship committee will also be aware that many members of the congregation have specific skills important to the work of ministry. Learning on internship can be greatly increased if these resources are identified and incorporated into the internship program. A few congregations have already tried this in an exploratory way. The following notes are suggestions for action. The committee is invited to share experiences in this process with the seminaries.

Possible resources are:

Teachers who understand the different learning needs of people at various stages of development;

Social workers who understand how to help people in solving their problems without destroying their ability to help themselves;

Counselors;

Administrators and/or office **managers** who can help the intern establish useful patterns in dealing with the routine of office management;

People in maintenance who can help the intern understand the on-going needs for maintenance of a church building and plant;

People with skills in **time management;**

Civil servants and many others.

Obviously the intern will not become an expert in any of these areas. But, some basic understanding of skills in all of these areas is needed when the intern becomes an ordained pastor. These skills can be communicated in a variety of ways. In some cases, it happens in an hour or two of conversation. Sometimes, the intern reports to a special resources person on one or two pieces of work in a given area so that procedures and responses can be discussed. In other cases, it is agreed that the resource person will observe the intern in a particular situation with the understanding that an evaluation will follow. For example, a person skilled in working with very young children observes a children's sermon. A junior high school teacher observes a confirmation class.

In still other circumstances the internship committee will identify resources in other congregations to participate in the community and may wish to reach out and invite members of those congregations to participate in the internship process. But in all of this, it is clear that the primary responsibility for supervision of the intern remains with the pastor/supervisor. Most pastor/supervisors may find it helpful to know that they are not solely responsible for guiding the intern's development in a wide range of skills. Knowing, for example, that the intern is receiving observation and instruction in the process of teaching from some other member of the congregation will permit the pastor/supervisor to focus with the intern on the integration of teaching into the total perspective of parish ministry.

RESOURCES FOR INFORMED THINKING ABOUT MINISTRY

The primary resource in working with interns is your experience of the church's ministry. You know what has been helpful to you. You know what has not. While any individual's experience and reactions are obviously limited, the members of the internship committee represent a broad perspective which can bring about a healthy balance of observations.

Members of the internship committee may find it helpful to compare their thinking about ministry with that of others in their denomination.

The following resources are provided to help in thinking about ministry:

ELCA STANDARDS ON MINISTRY

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has adopted affirmations about the ministry of the baptized people of God and also about the ordained ministry within the people of God.

Ministry of the Baptized People of God

This church affirms the universal priesthood of all its baptized members. In its function and its structure this church commits itself to the equipping and supporting of all its members for their ministries in the world and in this church. It is within this context of ministry that the church calls or appoints some of its baptized members for specific ministries in this church.

Ordained Ministry

Within the people of God and for the sake of the Gospel ministry entrusted to all believers, God has instituted the office of ministry of Word and Sacrament. To carry out this ministry, this church calls and ordains qualified persons.

An ordained minister of this church shall be a person whose commitment to Christ, soundness in the faith, aptness to preach, teach, and witness, and whole educational qualifications 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 shall comply with the constitution of this church.

In accordance with this description of an ordained minister, the ELCA sets forth the following standards, for its ordained ministry:

Basic Standards. Persons admitted to and continued in ordained ministry of this church shall satisfactorily meet and maintain the following:

- A. commitment to Christ;
- B. acceptance of and adherence to the Confession of the Faith of this church;
- C. willingness and ability to serve in response to the needs of this church;
- D. academic and practical qualifications for ministry;
- E. life consistent with the Gospel and personal qualifications including leadership abilities and competence interpersonal relationships; and
- F. receipt and acceptance of a letter of call.
- G. membership in a congregation of this church.

Preparation. Except as provided below, a candidate for ordination shall have:

- A. membership in a congregation of this church and endorsement by its pastor and council;

- B. been under the guidance and supervision of the appropriate committee for at least a year before being recommended for ordination;
- C. satisfactorily completed the requirements for the Master of Divinity degree from an accredited theological school in North America, including practical preparation as defined by the department of Vocation and Education such as internship and supervised clinical work;
- D. completed at least one year of residency in a seminary of this church, except when waived by the appropriate committee in consultation with the faculty of a seminary of this church;
- E. been endorsed by the faculty of a seminary of this church; and
- F. been examined and approved by the appropriate committee according to procedures established by the Vocation and Education, after consultation with the seminaries of this church.

ELCA Expectations Concerning Sexual Conduct

As a response to recent questions raised in the ELCA about the sexual conduct of candidates for ordained ministry and associates in ministry, the Vocation and Education presented the following statement in autumn 1988:

"Will you be diligent in your study of Holy Scriptures and your use of the means of grace? Will you pray for God's people, nourish them with the Word and Holy Sacraments, and lead them by your own example in faithful service and holy living?"

- The Rite of Ordination

"Will you trust in God's care, seek to grow in love for those you serve, strive for excellence in your skills, and adorn the Gospel of God with a godly life?"

- Installation of a Lay Professional Leader

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America expects its pastors and associates in ministry to be good examples in matters of personal conduct. It is the further understanding of this church that the issue of sexual conduct is an important one for candidates for specific ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. There are expectations of all candidates, including those who seek certification as associates in ministry as well as those seeking ordination, concerning what is appropriate sexual conduct. It is important that there be a clear understanding of these expectations by all those involved in the candidacy process so that the concerns of the church can be addressed.

Even though further study and discussion are necessary as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America attempts to understand and respond to the complex issues of human sexuality, including the issue of homosexuality, this church must speak to the matter of the sexual conduct of those preparing for service as a

pastor or associate in ministry in the context of the perceptions of the expectations of the people of God within the ELCA.

This is done with no small trepidation, as it touches on an aspect of life that is deeply personal and yet profound in its impact on the life of the community. As Christians we stand in the wondrous light of God's forgiving love as we acknowledge our past failure and seek to know and do God's will in our lives. All of us live as people under the cross of Christ. It is that event of God's self-giving love which gives us forgiveness, wholeness, and salvation. We are indeed saved only by God's grace and empowered to serve God and one another as we live out that grace. As such people we must struggle together to live out the implications of that grace in our lives--even as we seek to become more fully the persons God calls us to be.

In this spirit and with this understanding, the Vocation and Education shares the following Interim Guidelines concerning the sexual conduct of candidates in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

I. The appropriate setting for sexual intercourse and other erotic expressions of sexual intimacy is marriage. A pattern of behavior that substitutes promiscuous behavior or the sexual abuse of another for that of a relationship of commitment and care is conduct that is inappropriate and is reason for a person to be removed from candidacy in the ELCA.

II. There is a distinction between homosexual orientation and homosexual behavior. A pattern of behavior that includes homosexual erotic activity is conduct that is inappropriate and is reason for a person to be removed from candidacy in the ELCA.

III. The candidacy committees of this church are responsible for the evaluation of persons seeking to serve in the ordained and certified ministries of the ELCA. That does not mean that committees will be requesting candidates to share personal and intimate aspects of their lives. Such inquiries are themselves inappropriate. It is rather the responsibility of the candidacy committees to ascertain that every person seeking candidacy is aware of the expectations of this church concerning sexual conduct, and to ask every person if he or she is committed to live a life that is consistent with those expectations.

PRESIDING AT EUCHARIST

Interns and congregations are reminded of the ELCA's policy on appropriate presiding ministers at the Eucharist. In 1978, the conventions of the Lutheran Church in America and the American Lutheran Church adopted A Statement on Communion Practices. Concerning the presiding minister of the Eucharist, it states:

It is the gathered people of God who celebrate the Sacrament. But in accordance with the Lutheran Confessions and traditional church practice, the pastor, as the one duly called and ordained for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament, shall preside at the Holy Communion (AC XIV) . . . Lay persons may be authorized by the president of the church or of the appropriate synod/district to preside in those situations where an ordained person is not available for an extended period of time. ...The appropriate liturgical role for seminarians at celebrations of Holy Communion is to serve as assisting ministers.

Lutheran students are expected to follow these guidelines, both on campus and during field work, CPE assignments, internship, and elsewhere. We discourage students from seeking authorization to preside at the Eucharist. The absence of an ordained pastor for several weeks does not constitute the "extended period of time" referred to in the statement.

GUIDELINES ON THE FUNCTION AND USE OF THE CLERICAL COLLAR

1. At our seminaries, the clerical collar is viewed as an external symbol of pastoral formation, rather than a symbol denoting pastoral authority. Theologically, the stole is a sign of the servant-hood of Jesus Christ, and is therefore reserved for the ordained ministry.
2. In practice, many of the students of our seminaries are encouraged by parishes to begin wearing the clerical collar during their first and subsequent contextual education experience.
3. Since the clerical collar is representative of pastoral leadership, its use is appropriate when students are involved in pastoral settings, e.g. leading worship and pastoral visitation. Therefore, its use is not appropriate outside such settings.
4. When wearing the clerical collar in pastoral settings in which another person may mistake the seminarian to be an ordained pastor, the seminarian is expected to identify her/himself as a pastoral intern, student chaplain, student, etc.
5. It is not fitting for students in programs other than the M.Div. track to wear the clerical collar because they are not in the process of forming a pastoral identity.

TITLES

Approved titles include “intern,” “vicar,” or “pastoral intern.” Under no circumstances is the intern to be called “pastor,” or “The Reverend.” The Church in its own good time bestows these latter titles by ordination. No congregation and no seminary of the ELCA has the right to convey that which the Church has reserved to its candidacy process.

THE LEARNING COVENANT

WORKSHEET FOR INTERN COMMITTEE

(Chairperson of Internship Committee: Please see that each committee member has a copy of this worksheet. You may wish to use other sheets of paper to make this manual re-useable)

As persons selected to work with the minister-in-training on behalf of the teaching parish, it is important that you talk some things through (together with the pastor or field instructor) in your preparation for building the Learning Covenant. This covenant asks you to make explicit the hopes and expectations which you bring to this experience. Use this worksheet as an inventory: what you have to give the intern and what you want to receive from the intern.

I. What We Are Ready to Offer.

- A. To introduce yourselves individually to the intern, each member should prepare a brief statement and attach it to this worksheet. Please include the following:
- who you are as a member of a family, and nature of work outside home;
 - past and present positions of church leadership;
 - any positions of community leadership;
 - the three most important things you look for in a minister;
 - as our new intern, you can count on me for;
- B. What prompted you to serve on this committee? What personal/spiritual enrichment would you hope to receive from serving on this committee?

- C. What are some of the special opportunities which this congregation or parish has to offer an intern? How could the committee help the intern use these opportunities most effectively?

- D. In this particular parish, are there concerns from past experience which could influence your relationship with this intern?

II. Our Mission as a Church.

If the church or parish has recently formulated a mission statement, please share it here. If none has been written recently, then articulate as a committee what you understand that mission to be, and the priorities in this church's life and mission for the coming year.

III. What We Want or Expect.

- A. What are the three most important areas which the committee feels the intern should help with in the next four months? Briefly describe his/her involvement, and what you want to see accomplished:

- 1.

- 2.

- 3.

- B. In his/her learning and growth:

What do you want to say to your intern about how you hope he/she will use this experience for growing in ministry?

EVALUATION FORMS

Evaluation Forms are found directly from the ELCA web-site utilizing Formatta Filler 6.0:

Go to www.elca.org

At the bottom of the main webpage click on Congregational and Synodical Mission
Candidacy
Candidacy Forms
Forms for Seminary Use

Discuss with the intern when this should happen to enable you to be comfortable with the documents which we require. Be aware that the seminaries are required to submit copies of your evaluations to the intern's candidacy committee through the office of the bishop of the intern. At Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary we require the student to send copies of the Mid-year evaluations to their synod. For the Final Evaluations, the Office of Field Education sends copies to the student's Synod office.

Three principles should guide you as you write your evaluations of the intern:

- 1. Be honest.** Your intern will welcome your candor and may benefit greatly from it.
- 2. Be balanced.** Strengths may be tempered by being overdone. Your life experience may help identify pitfalls to avoid. An example might be: "You work very hard. Beware of becoming a workaholic;" or "You function at too slow a pace. Try to communicate more clearly to those with whom you are working about your desire not to make a mistake."
- 3. Use many concrete examples.** Evaluations are much more helpful if you, as writer, use illustrations that are specific and will help the intern recall the actual behavior about which you are commenting. An example: "Your sermon on the Good Shepherd passage was especially helpful to me." or "An elderly member (use the name) said your prayers at her bedside were comforting."