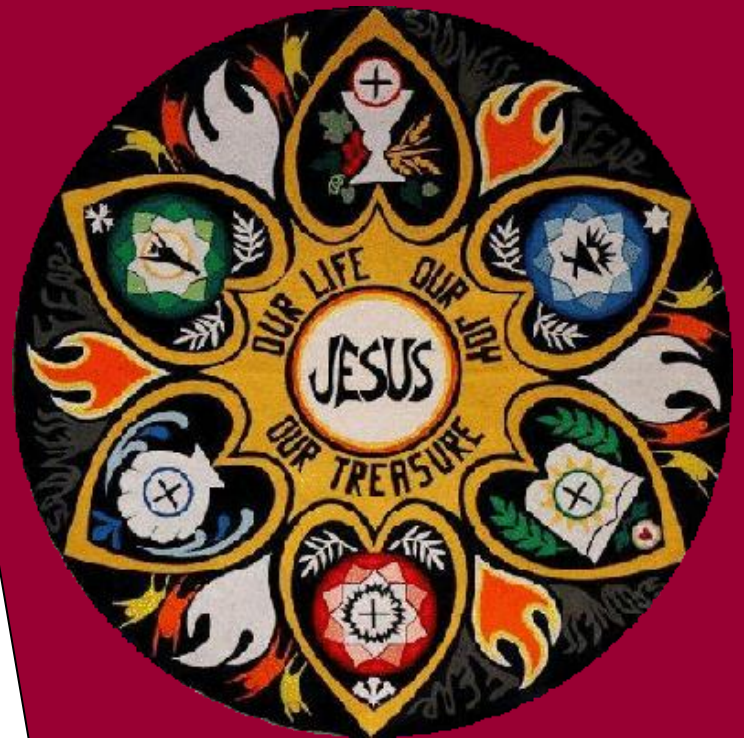


# Synodical Placement for Professional Church Workers

The Divine Call for Ministers of Religion - Commissioned



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## Preface

For 150 years, Concordia University Chicago has provided professional workers for the schools, congregations and other agencies of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. While the context for preparing workers has changed, as have the particular skills and abilities needed by these entities within the Church, the one constant which has remained is a dedication to the integrity of the Divine Call and securing the same for those qualified graduates of this institution. Each graduate who accepts a Call out of Concordia carries with them a bit of the "RF" spirit and contributes to our reputation for integrity, knowledge, competence and leadership in carrying out our mission to the people of God wherever they may be found.

Whether one is a candidate for a Call as a Lutheran Teacher, a Director of Christian Education, Deaconess or Director of Parish Music, the well-qualified student who enters this process will find that their talents are in demand in the early years of this new century.

As you read this booklet, it should be noted that the procedures and protocols outlined are in common use within the colleges and universities of the Concordia University System; the presentation bears the imprint of the author. It is my intent to faithfully represent the practice of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. In addition, this is a product of my own experience as a Lutheran Teacher. I think I owe it to the reader to be as honest and realistic as possible, while attempting to convey the real joy and satisfaction which is part of doing the Lord's work.

In all, the sense that I wish to convey is that serving God and his people is not only an awesome responsibility and solemn duty, but also a true adventure in faith. To work hard, to fully use one's talents while living in robust joy with one's students, parishioners and colleagues is where one finds true satisfaction in this profession, knowing that it was all done to God's glory and to build his Kingdom.

It is my sincere hope each year that those who have prepared themselves for ministry are ready to accept a Call in faith, are ready to meet the challenges that await them and, as we enter this endeavor together, that this be our prayer:

*Lord God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.*

Blessings!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M.A. Waldron". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Mark A. Waldron

## **PART ONE: Some Issues and Understandings**

The common experience of Synodical Placement is part of the shared culture of Lutheran pastors, teachers, DCE's, Deaconesses and Directors of Parish Music. It is a unique entry into a profession and ministry and it seems to have its own sort of mystique. What follows is a discussion of four broad issues, which I think, is the key to meeting the needs of candidates and the needs of the Church in an effective way.

### **A. *The Divine Call: Formalizing the Desire to Serve***

During the coming year, most graduates of Concordia's professional church work programs (Lutheran Teachers, DCE's, DPM's and Deaconesses) will receive a Divine Call to enter the full-time ministry in the schools and congregations of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. It is essential that candidates for these positions bring with them a clear understanding of what the Call means. The significance of the Divine Call goes beyond the set of procedures that follows: it is the basis for the relationship between the professional workers in the Church and the people whom they serve. Ultimately, it is also the formal expression of the candidate's willingness to put service to the Church above service to self.

The definitive definition of the Call is embodied in the words of our Lord:

Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples; baptize them in the name of the Father,  
the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.  
† Matthew 28:19 TEV †

Although the Church has, over time, sorted out and identified specialties within the realm of ministry, the Great Commission remains the underlying charge from Christ himself to those who call themselves his disciples, doubly so, I think to those who choose this as their profession.

For the purpose of focus and good order, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod has articulated how this is formalized within the church body:

A person is "called" when they are summoned by the church to the office of Word and Sacrament or to an office auxiliary to it on a full-time permanent basis, and by education, by certification, and by solemn and public act (e.g., ordination or commissioning) is brought into a unique relationship with the church from which they have unique authority and through which they are authorized to perform functions of that office of the church into which they have been ordained or commissioned, at a specific post for the length of time which is ordinarily continuing and indefinite, but which in certain cases...may be a specified period of time...evidenced by the individual's name being placed on...one of the official rosters of the Synod.<sup>1</sup>

That definition, lengthy as it may be, under girds what follows in terms of process, protocol and procedure. It is assumed that those who aspire to the status of Minister of Religion - Commissioned (under which Lutheran Teachers, DCE's, DPM's and Deaconesses are categorized) are fully aware of that relationship with and responsibility to the Church and demonstrate that understanding when they sign their Application for Synodical Placement.

In making oneself available for a Call into a particular ministry of the LCMS, candidates are willingly putting the needs of the Church and its people ahead of their own. While that is necessary for idealistic and faith-led ministry, some issues arise which need to be considered in that process as well. These are discussed in the following sections.

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<sup>1</sup> Commission on Theology and Church Relations (1981) The ministry: offices, procedures and nomenclature. St. Louis, MO, The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. While this document was "accepted" but not "adopted" by the Synod, it continues to be a primary reference for defining the Call.

## ***B. Divinely Instituted: Humanly Administered***

As is common to the entire mission of the Church, the process of coordinating the initial Call for professional church workers is a great example of how God exercises his will through human means. The Divine Call is recognized as a manifestation of the working of the Holy Spirit yet human judgments, prayerfully made, are the vehicle by which the process is carried out.

Past President Heider shared a story in his sermon at the Service of Dedication and Consecration a few years ago, which went something like this (with apologies):

The small hamlet in which a man lived was caught in the middle of a torrential rainstorm. As the area was prone to flash flooding, the warning went out that all the residents should prepare to evacuate. One long-time resident had been through this many times before and decided to stick it out and take his chances. When the water reached the first floor of his two-story house, he moved to the second. When the second floor was inundated, he moved to the roof and began to pray. As he sat in the rain on his roof, a rowboat manned by rescue personnel floated by. Confident in his prayer, he declined their assistance. The water continued to rise. Soon a helicopter positioned itself overhead and a voice from the chopper again offered assistance. He waved them off as well. An hour later, he finally lost his grip on the weathervane, was swept away and perished.

Upon arrival in heaven, he angrily confronted the Lord. "I was in danger and prayed for deliverance and I drowned anyway. What happened?"

The Almighty replied, "Quit complaining: I sent a boat AND a helicopter to rescue you. What were you waiting for?"

While all of us are properly dependent upon God for guidance, we need to realize that God's will for us will be worked out through those around us. Concordia faculty members, school principals, congregational boards, pastors, Call committees and, I daresay, Placement Directors, will be working to fill positions in congregations. When the Call comes, we will not end up like our friend in the story, because we will have recognized God's work in those around us.

Further, although those decisions and judgements take time and are carried out in a variety of ways within congregations and schools, they generally achieve the same result. What comes out of this is the articulation of a need for an individual to serve and the process that leads the people in that congregation or school to the selection of such an individual.

One impact upon you as a candidate is that, for a short period of time, everything will seem to be "in limbo", up in the air and rather ambiguous. It is likely that your name and credentials will be under consideration at several different locations, each of which may have a slightly different set of needs and different mechanisms for Calling workers. It may seem as though the wheels are turning very slowly out there as Calling bodies make decisions. We operate, however, under the assumption that God's will is at work and that all concerned are operating under the same dynamic of faith and that none of this is random or accidental. It is helpful to all concerned that a certain measure of patience and trust becomes a part of this.

Finally, I think it is important to understand and accept that God's will is exercised through the structure of the Church, specifically the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Lutheran Christians accept that one's baptism and participation in the Lord's Supper are an enactment of God's ordinances and are his sacramental gifts for maintaining the relationship with him. There are other means, not necessarily sacramental in nature, which serve parallel, supporting functions. These may not necessarily be "Biblically prescribed" but fall under what Martin Luther termed *adiaphora*, that is, ecclesiastical traditions or rites that are created by the people of the Church, (as opposed to those ordained by God) to give meaning to particular events or relationships within it.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Heinitz, K. (1999) Personal consultation.

Examples? Confirmation is one of these and most people can understand that viewpoint. But how about something like a marriage ceremony? God gives us an outline to follow, but we have to come up with the "nuts and bolts" of the procedure. It does not say in the Bible that we have to exchange rings: that is a social convention of American society (and in Europe, the wedding ring may be worn on the right hand.) But God is pretty straightforward in saying that the real "marriage" occurs when the two "become one flesh" with all the implications of that for relationships, pre-marital and otherwise. The public rite itself, which precedes that very private event, is not Biblical, but the essential statement of commitment is.

Similarly, God sends us out with the Great Commission, distinguishes between those who are Called as pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc., but leaves the process itself up to us, hence the variation in denominational practice. The authority in the Call comes from God. The process we all agree to comes through the structure of the Church, in our case, the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. It can change (and has changed over time), but the thread that runs through it remains the same. (And of course, God is not limited to what the LCMS identifies as the Call process - If he wants a person in ministry, he will make it happen - the Call process is just one of those ways of which we can be certain.)

For one to question whether God's will is working through the action of a congregation in the Call is, therefore, at the same level of questioning the validity of a marriage ceremony or the authority of the Church in confirmation. It is from that standpoint that the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod establishes the process and protocol for the Divine Call, charges Placement Directors for its enactment, and to which it holds candidates responsible. It is a process that is larger than the individual, but in which the individual candidates have the privilege of operating under their own free will. **When the Call comes then, take comfort and confidence in the fact that it is from God through his Church.**

### ***C. Personnel Needs-Personal Needs***

One of the transitions which occur when one graduates and accepts a Call is that one takes on an identity, which is likely new for most graduates. The first time I think I realized that was when, in student teaching, I was first addressed as "Mr. Waldron". I thought for a moment, "Wait, that is my father's name..." and then realized that the person was talking to ME. The Professional Self is established at that point and the expectation is that new graduates rapidly become comfortable with it. Similarly, just as my fifth graders in student teaching asked me all kinds of personal questions ("Are you married?" Do you have a girlfriend?) I learned that there are parts of my life that are personal and should stay that way and parts that are okay to reveal professionally.

Learning to separate the personal from the professional is important. Your personal life, relationships, etc. are not specifically within the domain of the Call, except, of course, where the two intersect under the phrase "To exemplify the Christian faith and life". While the professional church worker's personal life must be above reproach, there are also just some things that are nobody else's business. One's Professional Life includes competent execution of the office to which one has been Called, contributing to positive and God-pleasing relationships with co-workers, congregations members and/or school families, professional conduct in relationships with children and young people and the realization that one additional part of that is the fact that you are a graduate of Concordia University Chicago. People in the Church pay attention to these things.

A good place to begin the practice of the proper separation of one's personal life and Professional Life is in the Synodical Placement process. When you interview for Calls, it is really the first time that you are not regarded as a student anymore, as you might have been in student teaching or internship. You are regarded as a brand new professional. Most of the difficulties that I experience in how candidates conduct themselves in this process stem from their failure to recognize this.

A brand new professional dresses properly for an interview and follows appropriate etiquette. A professional deals directly with people in the church face-to-face and does not, for example, decline a Call by leaving a phone message. A professional shows up on time or leaves word that they have been delayed. One's writing, speech, demeanor and regard for the Call and for other church workers, whether pastor, teacher, DCE, DPM or Deaconess are on the highest possible plane. Not to do so will create doubt in the minds of people as to the person's competency and does not help the reputation of the Placement Office or Concordia University Chicago.



Once a candidate has demonstrated their potential competency as a brand new professional, I will present that individual in that particular light to potential Call sites. I expect that candidates will back me up on that. Probably the one most significant frustration that I experience is to have given a candidate a positive and valid recommendation and then have the candidate do something that makes people out there wonder if we were talking about the same person.

A good example of how to separate the professional from the personal would be candidates who intend to marry shortly after graduation. Although a congregation will be very interested, excited and anxious to join in the celebration, (with a good measure of teasing thrown in) a candidate's very personal decision to marry is not necessarily germane to the tasks one will be required to perform in ministry. Wrapping up a relationship, engagement or marriage in the same emotional package as a Call into ministry often leads to confusion in priorities: making marriage plans feasible is NOT a purpose of the Call, although the two can often work out together.

Ethically speaking, just as marital status should not be given emphasis in consideration of a candidate for a Call from the congregation's perspective, neither should it be a criteria from the candidate's side in terms of willingness to carry out the responsibilities in that position. To be able to keep the two issues separate, to work through and around the challenges involved assumes the same level of mature thinking inherent in the decision to marry in the first place.

Another example would be the fact that often other very personal issues with which a potential candidate struggles which might affect their ability to carry out the responsibility of a Call. These issues may be related to health, emotional or spiritual well being, relationships and the like.

To be effective, professional church work, which is altruistic in nature, must be approached from a standpoint of personal, emotional and spiritual strength. While we all have our personal internal struggles with life and faith issues to a certain degree, those for whom such struggles have become disabling should re-examine their timetable for entry into ministry. Simply becoming involved in church work will not necessarily solve disabling personal problems and in fact, may exacerbate them, given the emotional and spiritual challenges involved in ministry.

Candidates who believe that there are such issues at work in their lives are invited to avail themselves of the assistance which can be readily offered or arranged through Concordia University. Inquiries about such assistance made to me as Placement Director will be held in confidence.

Finally, when one agrees to make oneself available to the Church where there is a need, one will face the fact that the location of a Call may be of considerable geographic distance from the candidate's home. This has impact on the candidate and their family or friends and on Concordia University as an institution of the Synod.

When the candidate goes through the placement interview, the question will be asked as to geographic restrictions. **My** interpretation of this is that I am interested in knowing whether there are any specific reasons which would **prevent** a candidate from serving anywhere in the United States, if not the world: the question is generally interpreted by candidates as asking what their **preferences** would be.

Quite simply, if we only serve congregations and schools which are within driving distance of the homes of candidates, we leave an awful lot of places out there which have no possibility of ever obtaining a Synodically prepared worker. We are not here to send candidates only to the communities that are the nicest, the most convenient and which have the biggest and best Lutheran schools and most active churches: ours is not a ministry of convenience. We are called to become involved in spreading the Gospel to those people and places, which most need to hear it. I challenge each candidate to be open to that without becoming unduly influenced by those who may have good intentions but do not understand the urgency of ministry the way that we do.

Further, related to the above, the Church serves people of all races, ethnicities and languages. While it takes special skills to, for example, serve a congregation where many people speak Spanish, it takes only a willingness to listen, to learn and understand a culture to serve a congregation which is made up largely of people who are not traditionally Lutheran. It is understood that candidates will be willing to be a part of that ministry.

Please be assured that I am quite aware of that the entry into ministry is a watershed event for candidates. While all concerned are ready and willing to assist candidates in making the transition from university student to brand new professional, there is an expectation that candidates will step out of their comfort zone to make that change.

#### ***D. The Big Question: Will I Receive a Call?***

The reality is that our Lord does not let a willing, competent worker sit idle. It is usually not a question of "if", but a question of "when". The record of this office over the last decade is that between 88 and 100 percent of qualified and available graduates receive a Call shortly after program completion. Of those candidates who remain at the end of most placement years, most are geographically restricted due to personal circumstances and subsequently receive a Call sometime within the next year, although they will likely have to find other employment in the short run.

Marriage plans and relationships are the typical reasons for this kind of restriction on availability. Decisions made in this regard WILL have an impact of some kind on possibilities for placement.

A second common reason for geographic restriction is financial. Some candidates elect to remain in the home of parent for a period time in order to pay off student loans. While this is a legitimate and growing concern, given the cost of a Concordia education, there certainly are trade-offs in this kind of arrangement.

Immobility to a parent's home restricts the possibilities for a Call and thereby also the income available for paying those loans. Additionally, if one remains at home after graduation, one is typically no longer covered under a parent's medical insurance and will find that most part-time jobs which one may take in the meantime do not provide these benefits either. The cost of additional insurance coverage comes out of pocket and further erodes the resources for loan reduction.

Immobile/restricted candidates should also be aware of the tendency to offer themselves up as "commuting martyrs". The obligations involved in a Call necessitate living within a maximum 15-20 minute drive of a school or church. An earnest "I can drive an hour each way" in order to remain at home and serve a parish at some distance is usually an effective arrangement only for the first couple of months. It is not long until winter weather, in northern climes, and the expense (check those gas prices...) and the time wasted in commuting take their toll. Students will be advised not to engage in such an arrangement.

Lastly, there may also be the assumption that one's home congregation will extend a Call to a candidate who returns to live with parents. This is unlikely for several reasons. First, many congregations see the real drawbacks of bringing back a "son" or "daughter" of the congregation immediately after graduation because it is difficult for the candidate to assume what we have called the Professional Self. First, many congregation members know their family and may have known the candidate since childhood. Second, there is a difficulty posed by declining to Call such a person in favor of an outside individual, with or without experience. Many rifts have occurred in congregations because decisions were made in favor of what was really best for the congregation or school as opposed to what one particular family thought about the qualifications of their son or daughter. In short, kinship does not always equal competence or qualification and it is entirely inappropriate to force a congregation to vote family loyalties instead of objective qualifications for a particular type of ministry. While Calls to congregational sons and daughters do occur, I do not encourage them from either the congregational or the candidate perspective. Again, it is simply an issue of the separation of the personal self and the Professional Self.

If an individual does not receive a Call immediately following graduation due to personal circumstances, marriage plans, relocation, etc., we do attempt to keep in contact. It should be stated that it is the candidate's responsibility to maintain current address and phone information with the Placement Office as new graduates are rather nomadic. Further, it is the candidate's responsibility to inform the Placement Office on a regular basis as to whether they are still available for a Call.

In order to secure placement for immobile candidates, we may file the candidate's placement credentials with the District office in the area in which the person is residing and may make use of key LCMS people or email list servers to circulate the person's availability. This does not guarantee that we will be aware of every vacancy that occurs, as this is simply impossible.

## ***E. Deferring a Call***

If an individual chooses to voluntarily remove themselves from active candidate status, this should be communicated in written form to the Placement Director and discussed in conference. The individual should, however, go ahead, fill out the placement application, and have that piece in place for the time when they decide to re-enter the process. Reactivation of candidate status is done in the reverse manner. If a candidate does not receive a Call for a period of two years following graduation, the Placement Director may require that the individual "re-certify" with the Concordia faculty by means of the Synodical Placement Approval Committee. This involves submitting letters of recommendation from one's parish pastor and a current or recent employer and a brief summation of the individual's employment history.

Please note that once qualified for a Call, one may retain or reestablish ecclesiastical qualification, however, one's experience base in the chosen category of ministry must remain current and viable. For example, an individual who does not receive a Call as a Lutheran Teacher and spends five years in retail management, no matter how successful, will be hard-pressed to demonstrate continued competency as a classroom teacher: We simply do not operate under the "once qualified, always qualified" assumption. Conversely, that same person who secures a teaching position in a public or other parochial school, given successful performance, will be much more likely to be given favorable consideration.

In all cases, it is helpful for the candidate to understand that the Placement Director simply cannot keep completely accurate track of graduates or their intentions without some help from the individuals themselves.

Candidates who defer a Call and who have received financial support for their education (from a congregation, District, or other donor) under the assumption that they would enter professional church work are ethically obligated to account for their change in plans to their benefactors. This may include financial restitution of the funds that were granted to the candidate. Candidates should consult the specific written terms of any such grants in consultation with the Concordia University Chicago Office of Student Financial Planning for more information regarding these responsibilities.

## ***F. Contracted Positions***

On occasion, new graduates will be employed by a congregation or school on a "contract" basis. This is almost exclusively limited to Lutheran Teachers. Although a Call is also a contractual agreement in the generic legal sense, we are differentiating here between a Call and a Lay Teacher Contract, i.e., the arrangement typically made between an individual who is a certified teacher, who may also be Lutheran, but who is not eligible for Commissioned Minister Roster status.

This arrangement may occur in several circumstances:

1. A school is looking for an individual to fill out a school year due to a maternity leave or other temporary situation. As the "incumbent" teacher still technically holds the Call and will be returning there is no basis for extending a different Call.
2. The wife of a seminary student takes on a teaching position in St. Louis or Ft. Wayne or at a vicarage site that is understood to be of temporary duration.
3. A congregation has a late summer vacancy and there is not sufficient time to go through the entire Call process, give advance notice for a Voter's meeting, etc. The teacher may be initially engaged as an employee on a Lay Teacher Contract, which is then converted to a Call at the appropriate time, most likely at the next regularly scheduled Voter's meeting. When the Call is issued, it simply replaces the contract.

Since I see it as my responsibility to coordinate a Call for each candidate, contracted positions will be arranged only when the circumstances seem to benefit all concerned, the candidate agrees to the situation and there is clear understanding among all parties as to the duration of the contract, the probability of a Call being extended and the candidate's understanding of how this may affect their Placement status.

If a candidate enters into a Lay Teacher contract without Roster status, the negotiations are entirely between the congregation and the candidate. The authority of the Placement Director as an agent of the Synod does not necessarily include contracted arrangements. I do consider it my obligation, however, to advise the candidate insofar as ensuring that the terms of the contract are clearly stated, that they are being fairly compensated and the reasons for extending a contract instead of a Call are valid. (For example, it is NOT valid for a congregation to "nail down" a candidate with a contract first through these independent negotiations, and then extend a Call later. This is an unethical tactic used by a few congregations because of the current shortage of church work candidates.)

It is the prerogative of the candidate to decline consideration of a contracted position in favor of waiting for an alternative position which position affords Roster status. On the other hand, once a Lay Teacher contract has been agreed upon and executed, the candidate is expected to honor its terms regardless of Rostered vacancies which may arise later.

### ***G. Mission Opportunities/Alternative Ministries***

There is an ongoing need for individuals to be willing to serve in overseas mission stations, either through agencies directly connected to the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod or other organizations. Each year, several candidates elect this option, many of whom work through LCMS World Missions to be trained and then assigned to locations throughout the world. Recent assignments have been to Japan, Taiwan, Vietnam, Slovakia and Argentina.

If coordinated through the LCMS Board of Missions, these positions may be arranged as the initial Call for the candidate. There is also the option of accepting such a position as a Solemn Appointment, which essentially defers a Call until the individual completes the term of their assignment.

If the candidate elects to sign on with another organization that is not a Recognized Service Organization (RSO) of the Synod<sup>3</sup>, they should defer their Call. Upon completion of their contractual agreement, candidates may contact the Placement Office if they desire to reinstate their certification for Synodical Placement.

Organizations such as Lutheran Youth Encounter (LYE) offer opportunity for involvement in regional or national youth ministry and contemporary worship leadership on what is best described as an itinerant basis. While challenging in its own way, the experience of living, working and traveling with a small ministry team is an experience one does not soon forget. Again though, if the organization, LYE or another, is not an RSO, the candidate should defer their Call until contractual obligations are fulfilled and the candidate desires to re-enter the Synodical Placement process.

Positions in outdoor ministry through camps and retreat centers fall into something of a "gray area". If the retreat center is an RSO, they may extend a Call to a worker, for example, a program director, however it is not unusual for these organizations to advertise their positions, recruit on campuses and ask people to apply for positions, BUT placement candidates do not "apply" for Calls, hence the problem. If a candidate is interested in camp ministry, they should mention that in the placement interview and appropriate connections can be made within the framework of the Call process.

Finally, the Call to service as a Commissioned Minister is a privilege (not a right) accorded by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. It is my intention to work to secure a Call for all qualified candidates each year and we have been largely successful in that in the past. The quality that makes this process happen effectively, though, is a basic level of trust between me, the candidates and the people whom we seek to serve. I will do my part to uphold that integrity, I know that the people of the Church are attuned to it, and I ask that candidates honor it as well.

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<sup>3</sup> A Recognized Service Organization (RSO) is an organization or entity that is identified by the Synod as eligible to engage workers via the Divine Call either as an Ordained or Commissioned Minister. LCMS member congregations, Lutheran High Schools, the Concordia University System, the Seminaries, Board of Missions and some social service agencies and camp ministries are examples. RSO's are listed as such in [The Lutheran Annual](#).

## PART TWO: The Call Process: Initial Assignment of Candidates

### A. Overview

While there are many individual steps that we go through in securing a Call for each candidate, there are really just three "stages" of the process: Organizing the candidate pool, responding to requests for candidates from the Church, and finalizing the Call arrangements with individual candidates.

The first of these is essentially an in-house task here at Concordia, that of organizing each group of candidates in preparation for the placement process. That involves my own need to get to know who the "troops" are in a particular group and, from the student's point of view, getting oneself on record as a candidate for Synodical Placement. There will be a number of forms to fill out which are the basis of your Placement Credential File. These, and the documentation that accompanies them, are described later in this section. Another important step is the Placement interview between the candidate and the Placement Director. Finally, the Concordia faculty becomes a part of this in that they must endorse each candidate as eligible for Synodical Placement.

The second stage is the arduous, yet exciting part. The Placement Office receives between 350-400 inquiries each year from entities within the Synod which are seeking information on candidates for particular vacancies. It is the task of the Placement Director and office staff to field these inquiries and exercise judgement as to who among the available candidates would be the most qualified for each position. Appropriate candidates are suggested and their individual credential files are forwarded to congregations and/or schools.

In general, we limit the number of sites to which a candidate's credentials may be under consideration to four or five at a time. This serves several functions: First, since there is keen competition for candidates, Calling bodies need to have some assurance that they are competing for a candidate with a reasonable number of other places. Second, limiting the number of places helps candidates stay focused and not become overwhelmed with the number of inquiries that they receive. Third, it forces me to spread out the opportunities among the candidate pool. Then, as one Calling body or another, drops out of the "hunt" because they have filled their position with another person, we add another location to the candidate's active site list. (Calling bodies are advised that if we do not have evidence of any action on their part within thirty days of receiving credential files, we assume that there is no interest in the candidate.)

Each Calling body, through their own process, screens potential candidates and makes decisions on who will be interviewed (although there are still a few congregations who do not conduct interviews and extend Calls based only on candidate file information). Candidates are contacted for either phone, interactive video or on-site interviews, after which the Call committee makes a decision as to which candidate will be recommended to the Voter's Assembly (Board of Directors in a Lutheran High School) to receive the Call.

Then, prior to the final decision by the governing body (Voters or Directors), a representative of the Calling body will inform me whether or not they are requesting you as a candidate for the position. If so, I will be in contact with you, as the candidate, and ask you if you are open to considering that particular Call. (Occasionally principals or pastors will phone YOU with this information, in which case you should IMMEDIATELY contact me.) I then generally give candidates about a 48 hour time frame in which to make that decision. If the answer from you is "yes", I inform the principal or pastor that I have **designated you as the candidate** for the Call - this is similar to the "old days" when placement directors made a sight-unseen assignment of candidate to a location. They then know, going into their Voters or Directors meeting, that they have a candidate who is "favorably disposed" toward the Call.

The third stage is a follow-up to the above. Assuming that the candidate (you) is officially extended the Call by the Voters or Directors, the congregation or school will put together an official Call document. For first placement candidates, this is sent to the respective District Office for the District President's signature, then to our office. We process your Call document and get it to you, either in person or through the mail. Part of that process is to inform the Board for Higher Education in St. Louis that you have received a Call. At the point at which you have received the document, you are actually **CONSIDERING THE CALL**. Since there has been significant up-front work on this whole thing candidates are usually ready to accept.

We provide instructions on how to reply to the Call, informing the Calling body, this office, the respective District and the Synod that you have accepted it. Once this is done, you essentially work with your new principal or pastor to get yourself situated to begin your duties. For teachers, this is generally at the beginning of a new academic year. For DCE's, DPM's and Deaconesses, whose responsibilities are not necessarily tied to the August to June academic term, this may be on a different timetable.

The final part of this stage is your Installation and Commissioning in a public worship service at your new Call. From that point on, any subsequent Calls you receive are worked through the District offices: Our job is done.

## ***B. The Call Process - Step by Step***

The following takes you through the Call process once more, this time in detail on each step. I edit this section each year and try to work into it the kinds of issues that have arisen the prior year as part of the explanations that follow.

### **1. Candidates submit application for placement and interview with Placement Director.**

The placement application and accompanying documents will ask for both academic and biographic information. To these are added Final Evaluations of student teaching and/or Internship, and at the student's option, letters of reference or appraisals from people who have knowledge of the individual's ability in the classroom or parish. In addition, Deaconesses and DCE candidates will be requested to submit a brief curriculum vita to their respective program director for inclusion in a booklet to be distributed by them to LCMS District offices.

You will need to complete the following four forms to create a Synodical Placement credential file:

- Records Release
- Synodical Placement Application
- Synodical Placement Approval (Faculty) Recommendations

All required forms are available on the CUC website and should be filled out and sent electronically to the Synodical Placement office at [crfplacement@cuchicago.edu](mailto:crfplacement@cuchicago.edu). You may access the forms at <http://www.cuchicago.edu/experience/student-services/synodical-placement/> Here you will find forms with instructions as well as other useful information. Make sure that your name and the purpose of the email is included in the subject line of any electronic correspondence with our office.

Please note that two forms require your signature, the Records Release Form and the Placement Application - Biographical Sketch page 6. These two pages will need to be **printed, signed and submitted** as hard copies to the Synodical Placement office, Krauss Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor. All other materials pertinent to your credential file should be submitted electronically.

In the placement interview, the candidate will be asked to expand upon or clarify the information provided in the application materials and to share information that will help the Director to know them better, personal interests, strengths, limitations, experiences, etc. The candidate will be asked if there are any issues, confidential or otherwise, which will affect their ability to consider and to carry out the responsibilities in a prospective Call. This is also the time at which it is appropriate to discuss issues such as marriage plans, career goals, personal concerns and questions about the process.

Although the discussion is intended to be informal, I would consider this to be a time at which it would be appropriate to dress as one's "Professional self" rather than as the "College student self".

### **2. The Synodical Placement Approval Committee approves candidates.**

By LCMS bylaws, there is no inherent right to a Call on the part of a candidate: The faculty of the Synodical school must grant approval for placement from which they graduate. At Concordia University Chicago, the full faculty acts through the Synodical Placement Approval Committee (SPAC) to give this endorsement.

The committee membership includes four elected full-time faculty members, plus the Dean of Students and the Dean of the College of Education (advisory) and is chaired by the Director of Synodical Placement. A statement of the function of the committee, including the right to and process for appeal of its decisions is available in the Placement Office.

All candidates graduating within the current school year will be asked to submit three names (at least one from the Theology Department) and two current, full-time faculty members (no adjunct or retired professors) for their recommendation to the SPAC. (All DCE's are approved in the fall term; spring and summer graduates are combined for approval in the spring meeting.) Single certification DCE's, DPM's and Deaconesses will submit two faculty names as well as that of their respective program coordinator.

The Placement office will contact the individuals listed and request a brief written endorsement. This confidential information is available for review by the SPAC in its meeting for the term.

The task of the committee, initially, is to discern the candidate's "fitness for ministry" and to advise the Placement Director in situations in which there appears to be a serious question in terms of a candidate's eligibility for a Call. The committee does not review student teaching or internship information, per se, although if performance in either of these is not up to par, the candidate's eligibility will be in question anyway. Initial decisions on eligibility may be changed should new information dictate. In such cases, the SPAC acts as a hearing panel and makes decisions concerning a candidate's continued eligibility. No Call is considered valid until the candidate receives the full endorsement of, or acts to satisfy the conditions set by the SPAC.

In the past, the SPAC has dealt with a variety of issues, such as mishandling of a Call, personal conduct as it relates to fitness for ministry, lack of supporting endorsements of faculty, theological concerns, substance abuse, allegations of dishonesty on the part of a candidate, questions concerning the individual's seriousness of purpose in entering professional church work and interference of the candidate's family members with the Call process.

**3. The Placement Director fields requests from Calling bodies and shares candidate names as appropriate. This is the responsibility of the Placement Director, not the candidate nor their family or friends.<sup>4</sup>**

When contacted by a congregation, Lutheran High School or other Calling body, the Placement Director, **at his discretion**, shares names and background information with the principal, pastor or appropriate lay representative. A concerted effort is made to be equitable to all candidates; however, the reality is that certain areas of expertise are more in demand than others, and that those who restrict themselves geographically will have potentially fewer contacts.

**It is essential for candidates to understand that the Synodical Placement Office does not, as a rule, generate or otherwise solicit contacts or positions with Calling bodies.** Further, this means that we do not know about EVERY vacancy that occurs. In short, if the Calling body is interested in information on River Forest graduates, someone will contact us. The role of the CUS placement officers is to be **reactive** to the needs of the Church, not to act as an "employment agency" or "head-hunter".

**There is a fairly common, but major, misconception that candidates are going to choose their Call or that they can request where they want to be placed or that the placement director is going to offer them a choice of locations. This is not the case. Rather than the candidate expecting to select from a "menu" of Calls, the placement director is going to put the candidate "on the menu", so to speak, as a potential worker for a reasonable number of appropriate vacancies. The Call will then come from one of these locations and, when it does, the candidate will have a chance to work through any significant obstacles to the Call prior to committing to its prayerful consideration.**

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<sup>4</sup> There has been some discussion by CUS placement directors of a password protected web site on which candidate qualifications will be posted and available for review by prospective Calling bodies who then contact the respective CUS school. At this writing, there is no definite implementation date.

Candidates who expect "employment service" and view themselves as a customer will: (a) be disappointed and; (b) should really re-examine their motivation for entering professional church work.

A variation on the above is candidates who become aware of an impending vacancy in the school where they are student teaching and let me know about it with the expectation that the Placement Office will promote their candidacy. Similarly, other teachers in that school may encourage the student teacher to "apply for the position". While that is a nice compliment, they may be unaware that the Synod does not allow first placement candidates to do this.

In the LCMS, the Call process dictates that the Calling body initiates the action through the placement office. For this reason also, **candidates are not to actively solicit or otherwise facilitate their own Call or the Call of another candidate.** This dictum should also be extended to members of their family as well. Candidates who engage in this are putting their eligibility in jeopardy. The reason for this is that, as placement director, it is my responsibility to ensure equity in the distribution of a limited number of candidates among a large number of requests from Calling bodies. Every time a placement candidate gets into the act and drops names of their friends to a principal or pastor, and contacts are made without conferring with me, I have to mend fences with the other congregations which may have had that candidate in consideration at some level. While I appreciate the spirit of assistance, this gets to be too complex to be a group effort.

#### **4. Calling body may interview candidates of their choosing.**

Most Calling bodies assemble a list of candidates both "from the field", i.e., with experience, and from the new graduates of the various schools within the Concordia University System. A Call committee generally narrows this list down to the most viable candidates and contacts them for an interview. Most initial contacts between Calling bodies and candidates are by telephone. **(Please be certain that your phone mail or answering machine greeting reflects the kind of message that you would like your future principal or pastor to hear!)**

Interviews may be by phone only, a conference call with the committee, an interview on Concordia's campus, an interactive video conference through our Distance Learning facility, or on-site at the congregation's location. (In the case of phone or interactive video interviews, pay special attention to differences in time zones!) Sometimes there is an assumption that, because we are working within the church and that this is an ecclesiastical process, there is little need to prepare for an interview. Certainly the Holy Spirit is at work here, however, this whole process is going to happen through human judgements, prayerfully made. Everything in one's placement credentials may point in very positive ways toward a person's suitability for a Call, however, Call committees generally want to hear a candidate **say** why they wish to enter ministry in that particular location and what they will bring as their talents. A candidate's level of confidence and assertiveness, and awareness of interview etiquette, including manner of dress and speech, will all play a part in the decision as well.

Candidates are strongly advised to attend an Interview Workshop sponsored periodically throughout the year by the Office of Career Services. Although geared primarily for the public education sector, one will find that many of the questions, the etiquette and the necessary skills in interviewing are equally applicable to Lutheran school/parish positions.

Those schools or congregations who are at some considerable distance from Concordia may invite a candidate to travel to that location for this purpose. In such cases, the Calling body may provide airfare for the candidate. If they do so, the candidate should accept only if there is very serious interest in the position. Money is tight in most congregations and it is plainly unethical for a candidate to accept travel arrangements if there is little interest.

It should be assumed that travel expenses are paid **for the candidate only**, not for a fiancée' or friend. While there may be a strong interest on the part of a parent to accompany the candidate, bringing Mom or Dad along is generally viewed as a lack of maturity on the part of the candidate. If a parent comes along, they should maintain a **very** low profile. Again, if friend, fiancée or parent accompanies the candidate, they do so at their own expense.



Please be aware that Calling bodies are **not** obligated to invite a candidate on-site as a condition for a Call. If there is no invitation to visit and the candidate feels this is necessary, the travel expense is the obligation of the candidate.

It is important professional etiquette to respond to all contacts from a prospective Calling body. Declining an interview must be discussed with the Director prior to any discussion with the Calling body. If it is agreed that it is in the best interest of all concerned that the candidate not accept the opportunity for an interview, this must be communicated to the Calling body with some specific reasons.

Finally, it is assumed that if a candidate has declared a willingness to serve as a professional church worker that all opportunities for an interview will be taken seriously regardless of the location, size and other attributes of the school, congregation and community.

**5. The Calling body requests their choice of candidate; with the agreement of the candidate, the Placement Director designates the candidate to that particular Calling body and informs them of the candidate's willingness to consider the Call.**

"Designation" is the gateway into the Call with a congregation or school. By action of a Call committee, the Placement Director is informed that a particular individual has been chosen to receive the Call. The Director then informs the candidate and the candidate must then decide rather quickly whether to accept the "designated" status. This is not a decision on the Call itself; this comes when the Call document is actually received. By this point, though, the candidate has most likely interviewed, has knowledge of the responsibilities involved and is aware of salary and benefits. Accepting designation essentially means that the candidate sees no significant obstacle to consideration of the Call. This is also the point at which to "bail out" if one really believes that the position is not congruent with one's talents in some **significant** aspect, e.g., you have the ability to coach basketball, but the congregation wants you to serve as athletic director, which is beyond your talents.

Therefore, when the word comes from the Calling body that a candidate has been selected to receive the Call, the Director will inform the individual by phone and generally allows a brief period for consideration of designation. Candidates may expect a 48-hour or over-the-weekend time frame for this. That is enough time for consulting those whose input is important and about as long as the Placement Director can ask a Calling body to hold off. If, after due consideration, there are still significant questions on the candidate's part, the three parties involved in the decision will confer to iron things out.

There may be instances in which a candidate interviews with more than one congregation before actually being requested and they may be under serious consideration for two or more positions. It is a great temptation to engage in behavior best described as "holding out for the best offer". These situations are best dealt with from a mind-set which considers each setting as a distinct opportunity to use one's talents in service to God's people in that place. When the request for designation comes, **one must properly give honest consideration to that location only**, excluding other possibilities. This is almost humanly impossible, but the effort should be made.

If the candidate sees no obstacle to considering the Call, the Placement Director (not the Calling body) then designates that candidate to the Calling body as the person to receive the Call.

If a candidate elects to decline the designation, it is the practice to have the candidate inform the Calling body of this. It is a useful experience to have to articulate one's reasons for declining to a principal or pastor. This may be accomplished through a phone call or another form of direct contact. A message left on an answering machine to this effect, for example, is insufficient and inexcusable. Email is not private and can have a "life of its own" which can come back to haunt the individual.

Candidates may hold only one Call at a time. Therefore, after accepting designated status with a Calling body, the candidate's credentials will not be sent elsewhere and any other locations where they are under consideration will be informed that the candidate is no longer available. The candidate is obligated to see the Call process through with the Calling body with which they have been designated. Further, if continued contact comes from other Calling bodies, which, due to time constraints could not be pre-empted, candidates are obligated to state that they "have a Call pending": **Once a candidate has accepted designation for a Call, they MAY NOT interview with any other Calling body.**

Other Calling bodies should, at this point, also desist from further contact. Given the competition for candidates, there have been rare instances of representatives of other Calling bodies attempting to dissuade a candidate from accepting a Call to another location, a practice which is clearly unethical. Candidates should immediately inform the Director of any such occurrence.

Since at this point in the process there has been adequate groundwork laid in terms of the "fit" of the candidate to the position, declining the Call when the official documents arrive should be only for a **very good reason** i.e., a radical or serious change in one's personal situation or some life-changing event, or a change in the nature of the position, salary, etc. Having "cold feet" or "butterflies" is typical, but should not count as a reason for declining a Call. If there is any possibility of declining the Call after designation, the candidate is obligated to discuss this with the Placement Director prior to informing the Calling body.

While all of this may sound very regimented, one has to remember that, from the Calling body's viewpoint, this is serious business. If the Call is declined after a candidate designates, the congregation or school must begin again from "square one" in the process and other viable candidates may have received Calls elsewhere in the meantime. While 99% of the congregational representatives will accept the decision of a candidate to decline as God's will at work, we must always recognize the seriousness of purpose on their part in this. It is expected that candidates will approach the decision with this in mind. It should be further stated that the care with which our office approaches this has resulted in a very consistent record of successful placements. On the average, only one or two people out of a given candidate group decline their Call, once received.

If a declination of a Call is handled properly with open and honest communication and in keeping with the integrity of the process, the candidate will be eligible for an alternate opportunity.

### A Word About Salaries and Benefits:

It is common knowledge that salaries in Lutheran schools and congregations are generally somewhat below those in the public schools. In 2010-11, the last year for which we have Synodical statistics, salaries for church workers averaged about \$29,976. The range of salaries was about \$26,870 to \$34,111.

Please bear in mind that while the initial salaries are higher, public school teachers generally pay a portion of their own medical insurance and teacher retirement, while this is provided at no additional cost to the worker in many congregations (which actually adds about 30% to the budget line for each worker above the cost for their salary alone.)

While the Placement Office does not have the authority to insist upon a particular minimum salary, those congregations which are on the low end of the scale are definitely told where their salaries compare with others. In extreme cases, I will simply refuse to release candidate names because every low-paid position we help to fill perpetuates the low levels of salaries. A few of the Districts have set minimum salaries for workers and have refused to approve Calls below that amount (and the good news is that, since that has happened, many congregations have raised their salaries in response). One thing that church workers can be assured of is that they will always have enough in terms of being able to adequately support themselves. One of the reasons that this is true is that people like placement directors insist on decent salaries. My insistence on this may occasionally be misinterpreted by some, including candidates, as "placing money ahead of the Call". Money, per se, is not the issue: it is the willingness of congregations to support their workers, that is, to be good stewards of the time and talent that professional church workers bring to a particular ministry. Providing adequately for them and helping them to grow into the congregation and community is the Calling body's responsibility and financial remuneration is just one part of that.

In my own opinion, I have never thought that the inordinately low salaries afforded church workers were any sort of badge of honor, nor are they a particularly endearing attribute of our profession. Furthermore, there is no real correlation between income level and dedication that I know of. Certainly there are congregations which really cannot afford to pay workers well because of their location or the population which they serve. On the other hand, there are congregations who simply are not willing to make the financial sacrifice necessary to support their workers in an adequate way or whose salary figures are just

unrealistic. Ministry is costly and competent workers are "worthy of their hire". Salaries have become an increasingly urgent issue as the cost of education soars and with it, the level of indebtedness of beginning church workers. It certainly affects the ability of the Church to recruit workers as well. In short, I want you to be worrying about how to be an effective church worker, not about where next month's rent or car payment is coming from.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to have an awareness of their own personal financial situation, loan obligations and the like, before considering a particular Call. If a candidate finds it necessary to decline a designation for realistic financial obligations, they will receive my full support. On the other hand, it should be understood that one's standard of living is going to change from that which one is familiar in a typical middle class home. It might be a used car at first, the apartment will be pretty basic and life is possible without cable television.

Salary figures are a confidential matter. One will find that, in the professional world, individuals do not discuss their salaries with co-workers. The same is true among classmates coming out of Concordia. Your salary is no one else's business, except perhaps that of your immediate family, spouse or fiancée'.

- 6. Calling body ratifies the Call through the appropriate internal policy-making or voter's assembly and completes the appropriate documents**
- 7. Calling body forwards Call document to the District President for his signature.**
- 8. District office forwards Call document to the Placement Office at Concordia University Chicago. We then inform the Concordia University System in St. Louis of the Call.**
- 9. Board of Assignments ratifies the request for the candidate.**

Upon securing a designated candidate, the Calling body acts to make the Call official, typically through the Voter's Assembly in a congregation or the Board of Directors in a Lutheran High School. Call documents are filled out and mailed to the LCMS district office with which the Calling body is affiliated. The District President must affix his signature to the Call, and forward it to the Placement Office. As the Board for Higher Education in St. Louis supervises the assignment of all church workers, the Placement office will submit to them, the names of all candidates receiving Calls. The Council of Presidents, which acts as the Board of Assignments for the Synod, acts to approve all Calls for pastors, teachers, DCE's, Deaconesses. The routing of the Call document described here takes about ten business days. In some instances, especially in the summer months, the Calling body may forward a photocopy of the Call document to the candidate to review while the original copy is going through the District office.

- 10. Call documents are received and processed by the CUC Placement Office.**
- 11. Placement Director shares documents with candidates.**
- 12. Candidate informs the Calling body that the Call has been received and is being prayerfully considered. (sample letters are located at the back of this booklet)**

Read 1 Kings 3: 1-15. In this account, Solomon asks God for the wisdom to rule Israel. It is interesting that Solomon does not ask God to make all of his decisions for him, but that he (Solomon) might receive insight into making those decisions himself in the best possible way.

At the point at which one receives a Call, God has already acted through his Church. There should be no question as to whether a Call received through this process is of God or whether a Call at one location is God's will and that at another is not. As previously mentioned, this is similar to the assumption that God's will is present in the action of other non-sacramental but agreed-upon functions of the Church, such as confirmation. Certainly a Divine Call is extended with prayerful intent and is under God's blessing. It is the awesome task of the candidate to review the gifts and talents with which they have been blessed and exercise free will in accepting a Call where those talents are best used to serve God's people. You may wish to consider this portion of Scripture to be an appropriate meditation when considering a Call.

Consideration of the Call is really the climax of this whole process. It is the rare opportunity to put one's future in God's hands (although that is where it is anyway) in a very real and immediate way but at the same time to exercise the freedom under the Gospel, which is at the center of the Christian life. Probably the best way to know when a decision on a Call is right is to reach the point at which one experiences a "peace" or an internal, gut-level satisfaction with the decision. That happens differently with each person, but, when all is said and done, one's decision cannot be anything but God-pleasing.

It is perhaps wise for the candidate to seek the counsel of those to whom they are the closest, but also those who know the candidate from something of a distance. Sometimes the latter source will see things in a person which are "too close" for friends and family to see and can offer good observations. Examples might be the principal at the school where one student taught, or professors on campus who were not directly connected with student teaching or internships.

A word of caution: It is a profound measure of respect between people in a serious relationship to give their "significant other" the freedom to make choices in beginning their career and then to reach mutually agreeable decisions which work for both people. If you are in a relationship in which the other party refuses to allow you this essential freedom and responsibility or uses the status of the relationship or any other means to manipulate or control your decision, the relationship is likely headed for trouble in the future.

It must be understood that there is no such thing as a "perfect" Call. If there were such a thing, God would have no need of any of us in any kind of ministry. I am convinced that is the influence of our fallen nature which compels some candidates to consider a Call and see only the imperfections of people, position description, facility, neighborhood, etc. and then decline the Call based on these. If the "old Adam" can trip us up by thinking only of ourselves and whether we will be happy or not, it has succeeded in direct disruption of the ministry of the Church. We are Called to a Ministry of the Cross, not a ministry of convenience. Accepting a Call is a willingness to become a part of something bigger than all of us with a sense of duty to allow God to use us through the power of the Gospel to change lives and to be instrumental in leading people to salvation. That task is far beyond whether our personal plans will work out. Personal plans put in God's hands will work out, but for his purposes.

It is also important to know that, in consideration of a Call, there is a difference between faith and feeling. For example, we believe that we are saved by grace through faith, not grace through feeling. Faith gets us through things that feelings cannot. If one depends only on whether one "feels" God's will at work (which is really more pietism than Lutheranism) one will not last more than a couple of months at best in any position in ministry. It is difficult, occasionally discouraging work, and only by the grace of God does it bear fruit. Beware of the tendency to depend only on an emotional response to a Call. While there is certainly what people refer to as a "peace" which results from a sound decision, the latter is something which comes from God and is not from our own human affect.

Lastly on this topic, there is a myth that floats around among placement candidates each year that says, variously, that one should "never take the first Call offered" or, the opposite, "you are obligated to take the first Call offered". Neither is necessarily true. The former is a common assumption in business positions where one might negotiate a higher salary by initially demurring at a job offer. That is not going to happen in church work, plain and simple. The latter is a holdover from the Call system of days gone by, (although you will still hear people, even at Concordia, say that the older way was a "real" Call and the way we do it now is not, somehow.)

The reality is that there is nothing that says that the first Call offered might not be a perfectly fine place to begin and conversely, that every church worker, new candidates included, has the right to prayerfully consider and accept or decline a Call. If you and I are doing our job well, though, the Call that is offered should be something that is within your capabilities, yet is challenging and makes the best use of your talents: as in many things in life, there are always "might-have-beens". My advice? Make a proper, ethical and respectful decision and do not look back. As mentioned, it is rare that candidates decline their Call after being designated.

As the Placement Director, I am probably too close to the situation at times and will have the parallel concerns of a principal or pastor in the back of my mind as you consider your Call. While I will push somewhat for a decision on initial designation, when it comes to actual consideration of the Call, I will be unintrusive (except of course for the need to make a timely reply to the Calling body) in the matter unless invited by the candidate to give input.

**13. Within a maximum of ten days, the candidate decides to accept or decline the Call and communicates this to Calling body, and the Placement Office.<sup>5</sup>**

*(sample letters are located at the back of this booklet)*

**14. Upon receiving your written notification of acceptance of the Call, the Placement Office forwards a notice to the respective District President, indicating that you, as a new worker, have accepted your first Call in his District. He is then aware that he will have to authorize your Installation and Commissioning when requested by the Calling body.**

When the Call document packet is forwarded to the candidate, instructions are included as to what steps the candidate must take next. Please follow these and complete the process in a timely manner - **within a week, TEN days at the most**. To do so will ensure that you are properly Rostered as well.

On the document entitled, "Supplement to the Diploma of Vocation" there is a space on the second page for the candidate to sign in acceptance of the Call. A copy of this document should be forwarded to the Calling body accompanied by a formal letter of acceptance. This letter should be in standard business format and absolutely free of any grammatical or other errors. Please be aware that these letters are often reproduced by the Calling body and included in Sunday bulletins or congregational newsletters or read aloud in Voters, faculty or board meetings. The composition and style of your letter should reflect the fact that you now, or will shortly, hold a college degree. The latter should go without saying, but we have seen some very embarrassing examples to the contrary. The correspondence should be typewritten or word-processed in an acceptable business style. If you have questions about how to do this, ASK me or better yet, my administrative assistant, to review and help you edit your letter.

**The Placement Office needs a copy of your letter of acceptance and the appropriate Call document page. We will not inform the District President that you have accepted your Call until we receive these pages. Unless notified by our office, the District President will not authorize your Installation and Commissioning and you will not be Rostered with the Synod. Please take care of this in good order and in a timely fashion.** Every year my office spends a lot of time chasing candidates down for these last pieces of paperwork - some candidates never respond. It will then come as a later, unwelcome surprise that, because these details were not completed, we were never able to follow through with the District. As a new candidate, you cannot be legally installed, commissioned and rostered without the approval of the District President. That does not happen without notification from our office and the request of the Calling body. Further, if you then operate your personal finances under the IRS code for ministers without proper roster status, specifically with regard to housing allowances, you are doing so illegally and may be subject to very unpleasant penalties. Bottom line? Please do the paperwork at the time of acceptance of the Call.

Also, note that if you accept a Call prior to officially graduating, which is often the case, your Call is valid, **pending successful completion of all aspects of your program and fulfillment of all obligations to Concordia University Chicago, financial and otherwise. This includes completion of correspondence coursework required to finish your degree!** If a candidate fails to complete their program in the projected term, the Calling body has the prerogative to rescind the Call and seek a different candidate. (Does this really happen? Yes, as several candidates discovered in recent years.) Further, we strongly suggest to Calling bodies that they request candidates provide them with a final transcript and, as appropriate, evidence of proper state certification.

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<sup>5</sup> Candidates are advised that acceptance of a Call is, from a legal viewpoint, also acceptance of a legally binding contractual arrangement, the terms of which are to be clearly stated therein. If there are items that are not clearly understood, these must be clarified before accepting. **Read the fine print!**

In short, if you tell me you are graduating in the Fall semester and are taking a Call in January to finish out a school year or as a DCE, etc., I will take you at your word. If things do not work out, I would rather hear it from you first than to discover that you have been deleted from the official listing of graduates, which is approved by the Concordia University Chicago faculty each term.

If, after prayerful deliberation and appropriate discussion with the Placement Director, the candidate elects to **decline** their Call, the candidate must similarly inform the Calling body and the Placement office in a formal letter. Until this written notification is received, the candidate's eligibility for further consideration will be suspended.

Again, while the majority of Calling bodies respect the candidate's privilege accepting or declining a Call, the whole matter, especially if one chooses to decline, must be done in such a way that reflects the seriousness of purpose for all concerned. Declining a Call is not like dropping a class, where one can just sign off on things and walk away from it, sometimes without even speaking to the professor. Your reputation as a candidate as well as the credibility of Concordia University and the Placement Office are on the line. If it is done with integrity, we can move on. If it is handled in a manner that is less than professional, and this office has to "clean up" behind you, mending fences and trying to explain your actions, the candidate should rightfully expect a change in the way in which their purposes are viewed by the Director. We will not rescue you with excuses.

**15. The candidate is Installed and Commissioned in an appropriate worship service arranged by the Calling body and authorized by the District President.**

The day on which you are Installed and Commissioned is a momentous one! The congregation will likely arrange a reception or other event in celebration of the occasion, and your spouse, fiancée' and family will be honored guests. Enjoy the limelight for the day and keep in mind that it is a measure of the respect which your new colleagues and partners in ministry hold for the office which you now occupy, that of Lutheran Teacher, Director of Christian Education or Deaconess.

### Subsequent Calls:

In just about any occupation, the rule of thumb is "the first year, you learn the job; the second year, you decide whether you like it."

Unless there is some really unusual set of circumstances in a particular position, candidates are very strongly encouraged to remain in their first position for at least three to five years. That is probably the minimum time required to start to know oneself as a teacher, DCE or Deaconess and to create a track record of success with students, youth, parents, congregation members and colleagues.

By the end of that time period, the individual may have earned an advanced degree, or personal/family considerations may dictate a move. Such a change should then be an effort to move toward the next goal in service, rather than away from some difficulty, real or perceived. As in other professions, an individual who "job-hops" begins to raise some "red flags" in the eyes of prospective Calling bodies as to whether the individual can ride out the challenges in a particular place, or whether that person will bail out again when things get rough. A part of one's responsibility in a Call is to be a **leader** as one is able to help a school or congregation get through tough times or specific challenges, not to abandon a place which is struggling one way or another in search of a "better" or more convenient situation.

Given the current shortage of Synodically prepared workers, you may also find yourself on the receiving end of overtures from other congregations or schools soon after accepting your first assignment. Be aware that among Lutheran school principals and pastors that those congregations who engage in essentially raiding other schools or congregations for relatively inexperienced workers are viewed in a less than favorable way. Opportunistically pursuing another congregation's worker who has been in office only a year or two is generally regarded as quite unethical. While it is really the "head hunting" congregation which is at fault here, in the aftermath, either the candidate or Concordia University gets the blame, because "we/you should have known better", and "Concordia does not train its graduates in the ethics of the Call anymore..." etc, etc. When it comes to fixing blame, bitterness rather than logic generally rules the response.

If you are approached by another LCMS entity as to your interest in another Call **you SHOULD:**

1. Recognize that you already have a Call to a place which gave prayerful consideration to your selection as a worker, and which has figured your service into its institutional goals for ministry.
2. Inform your principal or pastor immediately if the overture goes beyond the "feeler" stage, i.e., if you are told that your name is being placed on a list of prospective candidates. You may respectfully decline to be placed on that list as well.
3. Indicate to the prospective Calling body that they should also be in direct and regular communication with your pastor or principal about progress in the matter.
4. Recognize that, while there is validity to the idea that one should be open to God's will via a subsequent Call, one should be careful about closely examining one's ministry in the place where one currently serves and whether or not one's skills and abilities have been sufficiently developed and record of service adequately established.
5. If you are a Called Teacher, take a close look at the calendar and decide whether taking a Call after July 15 in any year will really put your present school in a difficult situation. You may decide to take the Call anyway (and principals know it is part of their summer to expect that people will leave the faculty), but you will at least be sensitive to the situation which will be created.
6. If you or your (future) spouse are graduating from Concordia a year or more apart and both of you are going into Church work, be aware that I will generally seek a Call for the second half of the couple in the same region as the person who graduated first. Once we place people, we try not to "unplace" them. Further, there is no ranking of commissioned church workers, as far as I am concerned, by classification or gender. For example if the first person placed in a couple graduating a year apart is a Lutheran Teacher and the second is a DCE, the DCE Call does not supersede the Lutheran Teacher Call. In that case, for example, I would first try to work out a DCE Call close by in order to maintain the teacher's ministry or vice versa. Lastly, while one can argue the relative places held by males and females within a marriage, the Synod does not distinguish things by gender in terms of qualification for a Call as a Commissioned Minister.

You **SHOULD NOT:**

1. Talk yourself into leaving a place before you have had some time to reflect and take advantage of the counsel of someone who is not emotionally involved in the decision. It is easy to tell yourself that leaving is God's will when it is really because of a lack of willingness to work through a particular challenge or to be able to work with difficult people.
2. Engage in negotiations with another congregation/school without the knowledge of your present administrator or pursue a different Call without being on record as doing so with your District office.
3. Use a subsequent Call to leverage your position or compensation in your present Call.
4. Accept another Call without formally announcing it in advance of your decision to your present congregation or school and allowing time for people to give you input and to affirm your present ministry.
5. Allow family members to get into the act to facilitate a Call for you so that they can have you closer to home, etc. While those are common parental issues they are centered on self rather than on ministry.
6. Allow guilt to drive your decision to go or to stay, although you will find that it is used by some to influence your decision one way or another. It is not easy to leave the class that was counting on having you as their teacher next year, or the youth group members who attended the National Youth Gathering with you, but people have to understand that change happens.

Please understand that the above is **not** to say that one is locked into one's first Call indefinitely, that family is not important or that you have no free will to exercise in the process. It is simply stated in an effort to convey that a change in one's position **will** have aftereffects, some of which just come with the territory in the life of each institution. My advice? If you consider a move within the first two or three years, you are leaving too soon. If you consider a move between four or five years or so, it should be for a **very good reason**. (At present the average tenure of a church worker in any congregation is, unbelievably, only four years!) You can expect that many, if not most, people that you know in your present Call will affirm your decision while expressing regret that you are leaving. On the other hand, you will likely get the "cold shoulder" from a few, which is regrettable, but just another sign of our fallen nature, which by that time you will have discovered to be very real in your congregation anyway.

In any case, after one receives and accepts their first assignment through the Concordia University Chicago Synodical Placement office, subsequent Calls fall under the jurisdiction of the District President or Education Executive. There is provision for making oneself available for a subsequent Call through the District office.

## **PART THREE: Some Additional Thoughts and Reminders**

### ***A Word About Teacher Certification by the State:***

Even as there are secular identities related to members of the preaching ministry, so also there are secular identities related to the members of the teaching ministry. One of the foremost of these is the licensing of a teacher by a state education agency. The church body strongly encourages its teachers to meet not only the theological standards for the role but also legal standards for the role.<sup>6</sup>

Completion of the Lutheran Teacher Education or, dual certification DCE or DPM program leads to entitlement for the appropriate teaching certificate issued by the Illinois State Teacher Certification Board. One is "entitled", but one has to request the actual certificate. This is done through the Office of the Registrar and includes verification that certification tests have also been completed successfully.

Candidates who accept a Call outside of Illinois may be granted a provisional certificate in that state for a limited time, however, this will require that the candidate already hold a valid Illinois certificate.

REGISTER FOR YOUR CERTIFICATION TESTS EARLY. If you miss deadlines and accept an out-of-state Call, you will have to return to a certification test site in Illinois to take the test and qualify for an Illinois certificate before you can apply for the out-of-state certificate! You will NOT be happy if you have to do this! Test registration dates are posted and registration materials are available in the Field Experience Office or online at [www.icts.nesinc.com/](http://www.icts.nesinc.com/)

APPLY FOR YOUR CERTIFICATE IN THE TERM IN WHICH YOU EXPECT TO GRADUATE. **If you fail to apply for certification promptly, you may be expected to meet new requirements for undergraduate coursework.** Pay attention to news of changing teacher certification requirements. Illinois certification has been in the midst of change over the last several years. Any changes in certification will come from the Dean of the College of Education and will be implemented as prescribed by law.

With Illinois certificate in hand, information on how certification works in another state is an item for a candidate and their new principal or parish administrator to discuss early on. It is advisable for a candidate to write the appropriate state certification office for applications and information as soon as an out-of-Illinois Call is accepted. Address and other information on certification requirements in all states are available in the Placement Office.

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<sup>6</sup> Holtzen, L. in Moser, C. (Ed.) (1995). The call of the Lutheran school educator. St. Louis: LCMS School Ministry Department.



As of 1995, the Illinois State Board of Education joined the Interstate Certification Agreement by which Illinois has teacher certification reciprocity with many other states.

**DO NOT ALLOW YOUR ILLINOIS CERTIFICATE TO LAPSE.** Who knows when you may be back in Illinois?

**SHOULD DUAL CERTIFICATION DCE'S HOLD TEACHER CERTIFICATION?** Yes. If you have chosen this program and have completed all necessary requirements, it would make sense to complete the entire process. In the view of the Church, you may not be involved in "schooling" as such, however, you are considered an educator, both by your Call and in terms of your legal relationship to the congregation, especially with minor children, including congregational youth. It is the practice of the Placement Office to strongly encourage dual certification program DCE's to hold the appropriate teaching certificate issued by the state of Illinois, initially, and of the state in which they may serve.

**It is the responsibility of the candidate to complete the process of becoming certified in the State of Illinois and in other states, if applicable.**

## **PART FOUR: Sample Interview Questions and Guidelines**

The following questions are routinely suggested to Call committees for use in interviews.<sup>7</sup> Prior to an interview, think through or, better yet, write out how you might respond to these. The questions asked in an interview will not vary much from what is offered here.

### **GETTING TO KNOW YOU:**

- Describe a personal experience that had an impact on your teaching.
- What passions do you bring to teaching?
- What books are you reading now for both professional growth and pleasure?
- What are your interests outside teaching?

### **UNDERSTANDING OF MISSION AND MINISTRY:**

- How is being a part of the Lutheran teaching/DCE/Deaconess ministry unique?
- What is your understanding about the role of the Lutheran school/congregation today?
- What is unique about a Lutheran school?
- What is your view of the relationship of the church and the school?
- How would Law and Gospel be a part of your ministry?
- How would you enable and encourage others in your charge to put into practice what is learned in the study of religion?
- What special skills and interest do you bring to this school and/or congregation?

### **INSTRUCTION:**

- What are the most important aspects of a teacher's job description?
- What skills does an outstanding teacher need?
- Describe your ideal classroom.
- What teaching methods do you find most effective?
- What are the components of an effective lesson plan?
- Describe a lesson which was particularly successful by walking me through each stage from planning through delivery.
- How do you plan a unit of study from start to finish?
- How do you know when students are engaged?
- How do you deal with unmotivated students?
- How would you differentiate your instruction to accommodate the varied needs of students (English language learners, racial diversity, gifted, special education, at risk, and slow learners)?
- Should a teacher have the same expectations for every student?
- How did you use technology during your student teaching?

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<sup>7</sup> From: Concordia University System Placement Directors. (1995). Guidelines and suggestions for interviewing first-placement candidates into educational ministries of the LCMS. St. Louis: Board for Higher Education.

#### **CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT/ORGANIZATION:**

- What classroom management style have you found most effective?
- What would be your classroom rules?
- How would you develop student independence and self-discipline in your classroom?
- How would you handle a student who continually disturbed your class?
- Describe the toughest discipline situation you encountered and how you handled it.
- If you are having classroom management difficulties, when and who would you ask for help?

#### **INTERPERSONAL SKILLS:**

- Describe a positive impact you had on a student?
- How important is it for you to be well liked by your students?
- What are the best ways to establish rapport with students?
- How would you develop a good working relationship with your colleagues?
- Describe your ideal team. What qualities would you bring to it?
- What five adjectives would students use to describe you?
- How would you like to be remembered by your students?
- How do you facilitate collaborations between home and school?
- When confronted by a parent on an issue, how do you best respond?

#### **ASSESSMENT:**

- How do you assess whether your curriculum is appropriately matched to your students' needs?
- How do you assess whether your students are learning?
- How does standardized testing affect your teaching?

#### **SELF-ANALYSIS/OTHER:**

- Discuss a challenge you encountered during student teaching. What did you learn from it?
- How do you evaluate your effectiveness as a teacher?
- During your student teaching experience, what did you find most challenging?
- If I contacted your cooperating teacher and university supervisor, what would they say were your strengths? Areas for improvement?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- Is there anything that I did not ask you that you were hoping I would have?

#### **LOCAL QUESTIONS:**

- Questions may be asked which relate specifically to the school/congregation, the position for which the candidate is being interviewed, and skills for extra duties.

#### **DCE QUESTIONS**

- What lead you to the DCE program? Why Lutheran education as a career?
- What are some current activities that you participate in to advance your own spiritual growth? (ex. prayer, devotional series, retreats, education, missions, etc.)
- How would you describe your own personality?
- What would your youth group meetings consist of?
- Provide examples of experience you have working with 1) children, 2) high school youth, and 3) adults?

This is just a sample of questions that may be asked. You should be prepared to lead an opening and closing prayer. You will be given an opportunity to ask questions before closing the interview.

#### **INAPPROPRIATE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:**

- Committee members should not ask questions which directly solicit information about your age, marital status or family plans, nationality, ethnic origin, physical attributes or disabilities except where these specifically relate to the requirements of the position for which you are being considered. They may, however, ask an open-ended question such as, "Are there any issues which would affect your ability to perform your duties?" Any voluntary response to such a question

may be used as criteria in candidate selection. In some cases, such as when we are attempting to arrange a "couple Call", it may be to everyone's advantage to know that you and your future spouse can fill two positions in a congregation or one in a neighboring parish or high school.

- A congregation may not request a photograph of you for "PR" purposes until after you have accepted a Call. Also, a request for you to respond to a set of questions via exchange of videotape on which you appear may fall into this category.

These last types of questions would be blatantly illegal in the secular workplace and although the reach of civil law may stop short of the ecclesiastical process of the Call, ethical behavior should nonetheless prevail. If you believe that you have been subjected to unethical treatment in an interview, inform the Placement Director immediately thereafter.

#### CANDIDATES MUST ASK QUESTIONS TOO:

You should be prepared with some questions of your own about the position. Some of these may be answered in the course of the interview before you have a chance to ask them. Having absolutely no questions as a candidate may be perceived as a lack of interest or initiative.

Suggested questions from you:

- What assistance will I receive in helping me to become a better teacher/DCE/Deaconess?
- What types of staff development programs and conferences have the teachers attended in the last year?
- How will my service be evaluated? By whom?
- How are texts/worship materials, etc., selected? What is currently in use?
- What worship styles are available to enrich me in the Lord's work?
- What is the projected timetable for making a decision on a candidate for the position?
- Do you encourage teacher to earn graduate degrees?
- What types of school activities promote parent-teacher-student interaction?
- How do teachers participate in curriculum review and change?
- How does the teaching staff feel about new teachers?
- How do parents support the schools?
- Does your school use teacher aides or parent volunteers?
- How do staff members work collaboratively to solve problems and respond to the needs of students?
- Does your school encourage field trips for students?
- How are teachers assigned to extracurricular activities?
- What do your teachers do during the summer?

Questions you should **NOT** ask:

- It is considered discourteous to ask about salary and benefits in the first interview. This information may be volunteered up front by the committee or the principal or pastor. You **will** be made aware of this prior to having to make a decision on designating for the Call.
- Any questions that would reflect negatively on the level of initiative, professionalism or effort involved in the Call, e.g., "Am I expected to be present at all school functions?"; "How soon can I go home in the afternoon?"

#### INTERVIEW ATTIRE:

Acquire an interview wardrobe. You are seeking a Call into a work environment that is generally more conservative in dress and outward self-expression than a college campus or some secular workplaces. The general rule: Conservative dress will not offend anyone; trendy or too casual attire will likely turn someone off. An outfit that you would wear to parent-teacher conferences would probably be appropriate for a teacher interview, for example.

Some general suggestions:

Women: Conservative dress or suit (avoid red) appropriate to the season, minimal accessories (no more than one earring in each ear), shoes with moderate heels, minimal make-up and conservative but professional-looking hairstyle.

Men: Navy, grey or dark olive suit or sport coat and slacks; conservative tie (no logos); white or light colored dress shirt; recent haircut in a professional style (as opposed to what might be accepted on a college campus); polished dress shoes; no earrings or visible neck chains.

Evidence of the trend toward tattoos and piercing of noses, eyebrows, lips and tongues, etc., (in other words, any visible part of the anatomy other than female earlobes) will not be well-received among those interviewing prospective professional church workers.

If you bring a briefcase or notepad to an interview, it should be in good shape, clean and professional looking. Leave the backpack book bag at home.

If in doubt on wardrobe, find a good men or women's clothing store and seek out an experienced salesperson. Explain that you are interviewing for a position as a teacher or church professional and let them do the rest. You need not spend a lot of money on this and will likely use this apparel for other occasions. Allow time for necessary alterations!

## **PART FIVE: Some Assumptions Concerning Calls**

1. **It is assumed that you will join the congregation to which you have been called** and that you will be a fully participating member in the life of the parish, including regular weekly worship attendance. Candidates who receive Calls to Lutheran High Schools may be assigned to membership in one of the supporting congregations, legitimately so. Additionally, it is expected, and will be mentioned in your Installation, that your personal life and activities outside the school or parish reflect favorably on the office to which you have been Called.
2. **It is assumed that you will relocate to the community or general area in which the congregation or school is located.** Insisting upon maintaining your residence at an unreasonable commuting distance is **not** a legitimate excuse for lack of participation in worship or other activities and will result in additional expense and inconvenience to you. Calling bodies will generally assume the cost of your relocation, or a portion thereof, from your permanent residence, most often your parent's home (NOT moving your things from Concordia to your folks' house to your new Call) and will ASSIST you in locating housing at a reasonable cost. The specific amount allotted for moving expenses should be stated in the Call document.
3. **It is assumed that you will apply for membership on the Roster of the Synod as a Minister of Religion-Commissioned.** As such, you are considered to be self-employed by the Internal Revenue Service and are obligated to pay Self-Employment Tax. You are also eligible to set aside a portion of your income as tax-exempt housing allowance. Details on this are available through your congregation or the Placement Office.
4. **Again, it is assumed that candidates understand that acceptance of a Call is contingent upon successful completion of all academic and financial obligations at Concordia University Chicago.** Failure to satisfy these may result in the rescinding of the Call. Calling bodies are encouraged to request a final transcript indicating that the candidate has successfully completed his/her degree as well as an original or copy of the appropriate teaching certificate, as applicable.

5. **A word about tenure.** . . . Tenure status which accompanies a Call essentially means that a worker can be terminated only for reasons of false doctrine, incompetence, insubordination or moral turpitude. This would generally preclude the release of a worker without cause. Conversely, a non-tenured Call assumes that the worker's relationship with the Calling body will be re-evaluated at the end of a given period, usually one year. Subsequent reappointment may be for periods of two or more years, perhaps leading to tenure status at some point. Extending of tenure to a worker is the privilege of the Calling body; some do not offer this to any worker but ordained clergy, while others simply assume it to be in force while not actually applying the term "tenure". Tenure should not be assumed for some positions and not others or for male workers and not female, as was the practice some years ago. Further, the issue of whether tenure is part of a Call or not should not be the sole criteria upon which a decision on the Call is based. If it is offered up front to a newly Called worker, that is a statement of confidence in the individual. If it is not offered, there are likely other reasons that probably do not relate to the specific candidate involved.

## **PART SIX: Final Thoughts**

Those of us at Concordia University who helped to prepare you for your entry into ministry, whether that of the Lutheran Teacher, Director of Christian Education, Director of Parish Music or as a Deaconess, including the occupant of this chair in the Synodical Placement Office, are anxious to see you succeed. To a certain extent, your success is a reflection of ours in preparing you. More importantly, all of us, especially those who have been in the ministry in Lutheran schools and congregations, have high hopes that you will experience the joys and meet the challenges that we know, by our own experience, await you.

You will find yourself among friends in your ministry, many of whom share with you the common linkage of a Concordia University Chicago degree. What you are seemingly leaving behind here in terms of mentors, friends and classmates is simply expanded to the whole network of people who are engaged in the same enterprise: the sharing of God's Good News and the furthering of his Kingdom.

"May the God who gives us peace make you holy in every way  
and keep your whole being - spirit, mind and body - free from every fault  
at the coming of our Lord, Jesus Christ.  
He who Calls you will do it, because he is faithful!"  
| Thessalonians 5: 23-24

# Synodical Placement Calendar

## **Fall Semester: August – December**

- Placement orientations are held (Aug/Sep)
  - General information on the Synodical Placement process
  - Distribution of placement guidelines and materials
- Candidates should schedule their placement interviews with the Placement Director (Monday - Friday from 9:00 until 4:00)
  - Candidates must submit all required forms prior to their interview
- DCE grads completing internships in the fall semester will be actively considered for Calls during this time period, including, potentially, a Call from their intern site
- Fall semester graduates are actively considered for Calls beginning in January
- Placement interviews conclude – target for completion is mid-December

## **Spring/Summer Semesters: January - July**

- NOTE to DCE candidates completing internship and graduating in the spring - Internship congregations must declare their intent to Call their intern by mid-January. If the intern site is not Calling their intern, these candidates are open for consideration to other congregations.
- Placement activity begins to pick up, dependent upon level of need in the field
- Secondary candidate booklet is sent to all Lutheran High Schools in early February
- Placement Office will communicate with candidates as credentials are sent out and as need arises. Usually "no news is... no news"
- The peak activity period usually runs from March through late June/early July
- Phone or on-site interviews are arranged directly by the Calling bodies
- Designated candidates requested and Calls issued on a "rolling" basis. Once a Calling body is actively considering a candidate, it is very important for the candidate to keep in close contact regarding the process with the Placement Office.
- Candidates should keep the Placement Office advised on any significant changes that might affect eligibility, as well as changes in name, address, and phone or email information.
- NOTE to DCE grads completing Internship in Spring semester: Internship congregations must declare their intent to Call their intern by January 15. If the intern site is not Calling their intern, these individuals are open for consideration to other congregations.
- There is no such thing as a "dumb question" in any of this. The more informed you are, the smoother things tend to go.
- Majority of Calls are finalized by the end of July

**Office of Synodical Placement - Krauss Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Room 200**  
**Hours: 8:00 am - 4:30 pm - Monday - Friday**  
**Telephone: 708-209-3030**  
[crfplacement@cuchicago.edu](mailto:crfplacement@cuchicago.edu)

Mark A. Waldron, Director  
Linda A. Hasley, Administrative Assistant

[mark.waldron@cuchicago.edu](mailto:mark.waldron@cuchicago.edu)  
[linda.hasley@cuchicago.edu](mailto:linda.hasley@cuchicago.edu)

# SYNODICAL PLACEMENT CANDIDATE CHECKLIST

Attend **Orientation**

Schedule a **Placement Interview** (approx 30 minutes) to be held prior to winter break

The Lutheran understanding of the Divine Call, as well as, the logistics of the Call process is explained in the “Synodical Placement for Professional Church Workers” booklet. You should peruse this booklet for information that will be helpful to you in understanding the Call process.

You need to complete several forms to open a Synodical Placement credential file. All forms including instructions, and other useful information is available at <http://www.cuchicago.edu/experience/student-services/synodical-placement/> Word forms are formatted with text form fields, ready to type and tab through. If your signature is required, the form is in PDF format so you can print, complete and submit. All forms must be in the Placement office **prior** to your placement interview.



**SYNODICAL PLACEMENT APPLICATION (WORD)** – complete (**typed only**) and email to [crfplacement@cuchicago.edu](mailto:crfplacement@cuchicago.edu) - complete page 6 with your initials and the date

Bring a complete copy to your interview for note taking

In addition, bring an original signed copy of page 6 to your interview (will be kept in the placement office)

**SYNODICAL PLACEMENT APPROVAL RECOMMENDATIONS (WORD)** - complete and email to [crfplacement@cuchicago.edu](mailto:crfplacement@cuchicago.edu) (DECEMBER GRADS - **must** submit no later than October 1)

**RECORDS RELEASE (PDF)** - print, sign and bring to your interview (will be kept in the placement office)

**LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION** - when your student teaching/internship is close to ending, request letters (TYPED ON LETTERHEAD AND SIGNED) from both your cooperating teacher/site supervisor and university supervisor and forward copies to the Synodical Placement office for inclusion in your credential file.

LTE STUDENTS when student teaching: (It is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to get the following copies to the Placement office for inclusion in your credential file.)



Send copies of **MID-TERM EVALUATIONS** from both your cooperating teacher and university supervisor to the placement office as soon as you get them. **EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FOR THOSE STUDENT TEACHING DURING THE SPRING SEMESTER.**

Send copies of **FINAL EVALUATIONS** from both your cooperating teacher and university supervisor to the placement office as soon as you get them.

You have now completed the first part of the Call process and your credentials will be sent for those inquiries that match with your qualifications and desires. If a Calling Body contacts you, it is important professional etiquette to respond to all inquiries received immediately from prospective calling bodies, even if it is only to let them know you received their message. The response should be as immediate as possible. Delaying a response may give them the impression that the message was either not received or is being ignored and does not make a good impression of CUC and its candidates.



**Office of Synodical Placement  
Concordia University Chicago, River Forest, IL  
Concordia University System**

**SYNOODICAL PLACEMENT APPLICATION**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Last Maiden First Initial

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address City State Zip Code

Church Membership \_\_\_\_\_  
Name City State LCMS District

Personal Email \_\_\_\_\_ Concordia Email crf\_ @cuchicago.edu

Cell Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Other Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

**Program**

<input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood	<input type="checkbox"/> BME	<input type="checkbox"/> DCE/Single Cert
<input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood/Elem	<input type="checkbox"/> DPM	<input type="checkbox"/> DCE/Elementary
<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary	<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> DCE/BME
<input type="checkbox"/> Middle	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Ed	<input type="checkbox"/> Deaconess
<input type="checkbox"/> Secondary	<input type="checkbox"/> Spec Ed	<input type="checkbox"/> Colloquy

**G.P.A.**       2.00-2.49       2.50-2.99       3.00-3.49       3.50-4.00

**Anticipated Date of Graduation**       Fall       Spring       Summer      Year select

**High School(s) Attended**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name City State

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name City State

**Colleges/Universities Attended**

select    Concordia University Chicago      River Forest      IL    /    -    /  
Degree Name City State Inclusive Dates (mm/yyyy)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Degree Name City State Inclusive Dates (mm/yyyy)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Degree Name City State Inclusive Dates (mm/yyyy)

**Type of Teaching Certificate** (Lutheran Teacher or dual-certification DCE only)

Early Childhood     Elementary K-9     Secondary 6-12     K-12 \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Certificate(s)/ Endorsement(s):**

Administrative     Middle School     School Service     Other \_\_\_\_\_



**Academic Program**

Undergraduate Major \_\_\_\_\_ Minor \_\_\_\_\_

Endorsements \_\_\_\_\_

Major/Concentration Courses Semester Hours

Minor/Theology Endorsement Courses

Christian Life	3
History of Christian Biography	2
Introduction to Lutheran Theology	3
Introduction to the New Testament	3
Introduction to the Old Testament	3
Spiritual Nurture: Elem School Child	3
Spiritual Nurture of the Adolescent	3
World Religions	3
Student Teaching	

**EXPERIENCE:  
Student Teaching**

Site \_\_\_\_\_  
School City State

Grade Level(s) \_\_\_\_\_  Fall  Spring Year select

Cooperating Teacher(s) \_\_\_\_\_ ( )  
Name Phone

University Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ ( )  
Name Phone

Site \_\_\_\_\_  
School City State

Grade Level(s) \_\_\_\_\_  Fall  Spring Year select

Cooperating Teacher(s) \_\_\_\_\_ ( )  
Name Phone

University Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ ( )  
Name Phone

**Previous Full-Time Professional Experience**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Congregation/School/Agency City State Inclusive Dates (mm/yyyy)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Congregation/School/Agency City State Inclusive Dates (mm/yyyy)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Congregation/School/Agency City State Inclusive Dates (mm/yyyy)

**Interests** (Personal/Recreational Interests, not necessarily related to professional training.)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

**References**

The following individuals can attest to the candidate's qualifications for ministry, professional strengths and Christian character and may be contacted by prospective employers:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name Title/Relationship to Candidate Phone ( )

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name Title/Relationship to Candidate Phone ( )

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name Title/Relationship to Candidate Phone ( )

**LEADERSHIP SKILLS:** Indicated below are areas in which I can take a leadership role:

**Training** - was part of my professional training

**Experience** - have experience to a significant degree

**Interest** - have future interest, whether through advanced education or voluntary participation

Age/Grade Level/Groups			
T	E	I	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Childcare/Infant/Tod/PK
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Childcare/School
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pre-School Age 3
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pre-School Age 4
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kindergarten
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade 1
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade 2
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade 3
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade 4
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade 5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade 6
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade 7
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade 8
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade 9
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade 10
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade 11
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade 12
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multi-Grade (any)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multi-Grade (middle)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Higher Education
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adult
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disabled
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	District/Synod
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ESL
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seniors
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Singles
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Special Education
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Jr High
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Sr High

Elementary and/or Secondary			
T	E	I	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Art (ceramics/sculpt)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Art (drawing)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Art (general)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Art (graphics)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Art (painting)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Business Ed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Computer Ed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Economics (consumer)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Economics (general)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	English (AP)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	English (composition)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	English (gen/sec)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	English (literature)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ESL
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Geography
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Government
Foreign Languages			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	French
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	German
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Latin
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spanish
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

T	E	I	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	History (general)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	History (AP)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Home Economics
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Industrial Tech
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Language Arts (ele)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Math (adv trg/calc/AP)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Math (basic alg/geo)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Math (general)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Music Instrument (ele)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Music Instrument (sec)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Music (Instrument)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Music Vocal (ele)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Music Vocal (sec)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outdoor Education
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical Education (ele)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical Education (sec)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Political Science
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Psychology
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reading
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reading (study skills)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science (AP bio/anat)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science (AP chem)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science (AP physics)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science (bio)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science (chem)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science (earth)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science (general)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science (physics)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social Studies
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sociology
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Speech
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Theater
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Theology

Special Education			
T	E	I	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attention Deficit
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Autistic
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Behavior Disordered
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cross Categorical
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hearing Impaired
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Learning Disabled
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physically Disabled
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Visually Impaired

Coaching			
T	E	I	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Athletic Director (ele)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Athletic Director (sec)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coaching Males
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coaching Females
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coaching Either
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Baseball (fr/so)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Baseball (varsity)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Basketball (ele)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Basketball (fr/so)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Basketball (varsity)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cheer/Poms (ele)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cheer/Poms (sec)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cross Country (ele)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cross Country (fr/so)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cross Country (varsity)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Football (ele)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Football (fr/so)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Football (varsity)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Golf (fr/so)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Golf (varsity)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Soccer (ele)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Soccer (fr/so)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Soccer (varsity)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Softball (ele)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Softball (fr/so)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Softball (varsity)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Swimming
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tennis (fr/so)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tennis (varsity)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Track & Field (ele)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Track & Field (fr/so)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Track & Field (varsity)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Volleyball (ele)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Volleyball (fr/so)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Volleyball (varsity)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrestling (fr/so)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrestling (varsity)

Extra Curricular Activities and Service			
T	E	I	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alumni Events
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Awards Committee
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Boosters
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Career Day
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Service
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Computer Club
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drama
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Faculty Events
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Faculty In-Service
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Forensics Team
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Language Clubs
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	National Honor Society
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Peer Counseling
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Peer Tutoring
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Publications Newspaper
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Publications Yearbook
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	School Calendar
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Science Fair
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Service Activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Special Interest Clubs
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Special Event Planning
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student Exchange
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student Government
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

Parish-Wide Leadership			
T	E	I	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adult Education
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bible Class (adult)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bible Class (youth)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Programming
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Computer Technology Networking
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Confirmation Class
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Contemporary Worship
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	District Board/Committee
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evangelism/Outreach
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fund Raising
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Interdenominational Programming
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Midweek School
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parish Administration
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parish Communication Public Relations
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parish Social Activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Photography
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scouts (boy)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scouts (girl)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Senior Citizen Programs
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Singles Ministry
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Small Group Ministry
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social Ministry
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sunday School
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Traditional Worship
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Urban Ministry
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vacation Bible School
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Video Technology
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Volunteer Coordination
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Ministry Jr High
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Ministry Sr High

LCMS Districts	
(rank: 1, 2, 3)	
	Atlantic
	Calif/Nev/Hawaii
	Pacific Southwest
	Eastern
	English
	Florida/Georgia
	Illinois Central
	Illinois Northern
	Illinois Southern
	Indiana
	Iowa East
	Iowa West
	Kansas
	Michigan
	Mid-South
	Minnesota North
	Minnesota South
	Missouri
	Montana
	Nebraska
	New England
	New Jersey
	North Dakota
	Northwest
	Ohio
	Oklahoma
	Rocky Mountain
	South Dakota
	Southeastern
	Southern
	Texas
	Wisconsin North
	Wisconsin South
	Wyoming
	SELC
	All of the Above
	Foreign Missions

Administration			
T	E	I	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Deaconess
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dean of Chapel
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dean of Students
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Department Chair
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dir Admissions
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dir Adult Ministry
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dir Camp Ministry
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dir Campus Ministry
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dir Children's Ministry
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dir Christian Education
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dir Christian Outreach
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dir Church Music
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dir Early Childhood
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dir Family Ministry
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dir Media Services
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dir School Counseling
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dir Student Activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dir Parish Music
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dir Singles Ministry
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dir Youth Ministry
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Principal (elementary)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Principal (secondary)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Principal (assistant)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Registrar
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	School Counselor
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Testing Coordinator

Parish Music			
T	E	I	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Band
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Choir (adult)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Choir (children's)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Choir (general)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Choir (youth)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drums
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Guitar
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hand Bells
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Instrumental (accomp)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Instrumental (ensemble)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Keyboard
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Orchestra
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Organist
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pianist
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	School Classroom
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sound Technician
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Worship Planning
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:

Community	
(rank: 1, 2, 3)	
	Large Metro
	Small Urban
	Suburban
	Small Town
	Rural
	Multi-Cultural
	Central City
	All of the Above

**Philosophy of Ministry Essay**

Following is a brief essay, including factors which have contributed to the candidate's interest in and attitude toward the ministry of the Lutheran Teacher, DCE, Deaconess or Parish Music.

Type your essay first as a new/separate document in Word, spell check and then copy and paste it here

Initials \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*A signed copy of this form is on file in the CUC Placement Office*

**Director of Christian Education** Supplementary Data

**Certification:**

- Single Certification (DCE only)
- Dual Certification (DCE, Lutheran Teacher Diploma and State of Illinois Teacher Certification)

**DCE Specialization:**

- Youth Ministry
- Family Ministry
- Choral Music
- Student Designed Specialization: \_\_\_\_\_

**Field Work Experience(s)**

Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Inclusive Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Inclusive Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Inclusive Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

**Internship:**

Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Inclusive Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Site Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Title Phone

**Deaconess** Supplementary Data

**Program:**

- Undergraduate       Deaconess Colloquy       Deaconess Chaplaincy

**Deaconess Minor:**

- Biblical Languages       Church Music       Psychology  
 Social Work       Sociology       Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Field Work Experience(s)**

Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Inclusive Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Inclusive Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Inclusive Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

**Internship:**

Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Inclusive Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Site Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Title Phone

**Director of Parish Music** Supplementary Data

**Program:**

Liberal Arts Church Music       Parish Music Certification       Colloquy

**Field Work Experience(s)**

Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Inclusive Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Inclusive Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Inclusive Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Inclusive Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Site Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Title Phone



**Synodical Placement  
Records Release**

**To: Synodical Candidates**

There is a continuing need on the part of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) as well as Concordia University to utilize certain Call document information for analysis purposes.

In addition, information from the Synodical Placement Office is commonly sent to congregations, schools, agencies, or other bonafide calling bodies of the LCMS (by mail or email), at the request of the student or at the request of the calling body. Such information is given out only prior to the student's initial call and acceptance into the teaching, Parish Music, Director of Christian Education (DCE) or Deaconess ministry of the LCMS. The information is normally of two types:

1. **A set of Candidate's Credentials will include:**
  - a. **Synodical Placement Application** – This is generated in "Word" utilizing information provided on the Profile Inventory. Applications are completed by the Candidate and includes:
    - i. **Summary of Coursework**
    - ii. **Brief Biographical Sketch** – describing your concept of the ministry
  - b. **Midterm Student Teaching Evaluations** – completed by the Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor. (used only until final evaluations are received)
  - c. **Final Student Teaching Evaluations** – completed by the Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor.
  - d. **Recommendation Letters** – from your Cooperating Teacher/Site Supervisor and University Supervisor.
2. **Secondary Information Book**

A booklet, sent to each Lutheran high school administrator in the United States and abroad, that identifies all secondary candidates graduating from Concordia University Chicago during the current year. The booklet lists each candidate by their major and minor in addition to providing a single page profile identifying each candidate's high school, previous college (if any), courses taken in their major and minor areas, experiences, interests, placement considerations, and whether or not elementary (if applicable) and secondary student teaching has been completed.

I hereby authorize the Synodical Placement Office of Concordia University Chicago, to release certain document information relative to my initial assignment in the Teaching, DCE, Parish Music, or Deaconess Ministry of the LCMS for the analysis purposes.

I also authorize the Synodical Placement Office of Concordia University Chicago to release the information in my credential file to any legitimate calling body of the LCMS to whom request that it be sent, or who request it for employment purposes. I understand that this release is valid only prior to my initial placement and acceptance of a position in the teaching, DCE, Parish Music, or Deaconess ministry of the LCMS.

\_\_\_\_\_

PRINT name

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

The Synodical Placement Approval Committee (SPAC) meets once each semester to approve the Synodical placement of those students graduating at the end of the current semester. For their review, three recommendations from at least **one theology faculty** and **two current full time faculty** are required.

It is not necessary for you to obtain the actual recommendations. All you have to do is request permission to use them as a reference and then indicate their names below. The Placement Office will then forward a form for each of them to complete.

**NOTE: Forms for those graduating in December MUST be turned in no later than October 1 to be included for consideration at the fall SPAC meeting.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Theology Department Faculty Member)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Faculty Member)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Faculty Member)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name

## Application Instructions for Undergraduate Students

### Instructions:

In order to produce a credential file that can be transmitted to prospective Call sites, it is important to complete the following information clearly and accurately. The "on-line" format lends itself to a quick correction and ease of updating information as well as transmission of credential information. The information submitted here is open to review by authorized representatives of Calling bodies who have requested potential candidates through the Office of Synodical Placement. **IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO KEEP THIS INFORMATION UP-TO-DATE THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS - that means, until you received your first Call!!!**

### On-line Form Navigation:

Forms are Microsoft Word 2010, set as "protected" with formatted form fields. All you have to do is type - tab - type, continuing through the entire form. The format in some fields has been set to change automatically once you complete the entry and tab to the next field. Some have "drop down boxes" allowing you to make a specific choice. All information must be typed.

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### Name and Address information:

Please check to ensure accuracy, especially phone and e-mail addresses. If you are a residential student, see that the "local (i.e. campus) phone" number also includes the correct three-digit exchange, i.e. 209 or 488.

### Program:

Indicate the program of study that you are completing at Concordia University. Check all that apply.

### GPA:

Indicate your latest undergraduate cumulative GPA.

### Anticipated Date of Graduation:

Indicate Fall, Spring or Summer term and the year in which you expect to complete your program (example - Fall 08).

### High Schools Attended:

If more than space allows, indicate the latest two name, city and state.

### Colleges/Universities:

Complete only for those where you completed at least one full time term. Degree is set as a drop down box and you must choose B.A., B.S., or M.A.

### Type of Teaching Certificate:

Indicate the type of Illinois certificate for which you will be eligible upon program completion, if applicable.

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### Academic Program:

Indicate your Major/Minor (secondary) and Endorsements. List all courses by title (do not indicate codes/numbers) including the number of semester hours. Courses in Professional Education will be those listed on your degree audit printout or transcript with the department prefixes of EDU, EDUX, TED and/or ELF. Theology classes should be included, but **do not** list Gen Ed classes. It is acceptable to combine classes on the same line. EXAMPLE: DCE Seminar I and II, Literacy 1 and 2, General Chemistry 1 and 2, Aural Skills I, II, III, IV, etc.

**Experience - Student Teaching and Internship Site Information:**

Be certain to indicate the complete/correct name of the school/site and its location (there are innumerable "St. John Lutheran Schools or Churches" out there...) correctly spell the name of your cooperating teacher(s)/internship site supervisor(s) and university supervisors and make sure to include their phone number. Prospective Calling bodies will likely contact these references.

**Previous Full-Time Professional Experience:**

List any location where you have been engaged on a full-time, professional basis in a position related to a degree that you possess. Most new graduates will leave this area blank. Colloquy graduates (Teacher, DCE or Deaconess) will likely have information to offer here, which may or may not be related specifically to their area of ministry. Do not include part-time positions.

**Interests:**

Indicate three areas of interest that may or may not be related to your area of ministry or professional training. These may include sports, hobbies, civic or community activities, reading interests, recreational organization memberships, leisure time pursuits, etc.

**References:**

Indicate three individuals who can attest to your competency in your chosen area of ministry. These should be people who have observed your performance in a pre-professional setting and have the expertise to offer an informed appraisal. Do not use those who supervised your student teaching/internship (cooperating teacher(s), site and university supervisor), family members or social acquaintances. It is considered proper to request advance permission of those whom you name here.

**Leadership Skills:**

In the blank before each item, indicate areas in which you can take a leadership role.

- "T" areas that have been part of your professional **Training** this should include areas/levels from student teaching
- "E" areas in which you have **Experience** to a significant degree
- "I" areas in which you have some future **Interest**, whether through advanced education or voluntary participation.

Please mark items on these pages with care and honest reflection. *It is understood that any area marked T (Training) legitimately falls within the candidate's present level of certification or education.* This extends to extra-curricular activities as well, especially for teachers. Example - coaching at the Varsity level requires considerable experience and training. It is further understood that areas marked are "fair game" for discussion or inclusion in prospective Call.

Further, there are areas listed here in which expertise beyond the Bachelors degree is required, e.g., school administration or counseling. Although you may have future Interest, your choices marked, as Training must fall within your present qualifications.

**Age/Grade Level Groups:**

Teachers should choose the grade levels closest to those in which they student taught, at least initially, and which are appropriate to their state certification. DCE's and Deaconesses should likewise indicate the age group(s) in a congregation or agency that is closest to their experience in fieldwork or internship.

**Elementary and/or Secondary Subjects:**

Items marked Training must fall within your present qualifications by degree and/or certification.

**Special Education:**

Items marked Training must fall within your present qualifications by degree and/or certification.

**Coaching:**

Items marked Training or Experience at the Secondary level must fall within your present qualifications by degree and/or certificate. Items marked Experience are allowable at the Elementary level. "Experience" is defined as minimum of Varsity level team sports in your high school experience or advanced recreational team sports, e.g. Pony League baseball, advanced club level volleyball, etc. School administrators cannot employ coaches with insufficient experience or training due to the risk of injury to student athletes.

**School Extra-Curricular and Service:**

Self-Explanatory. If you do not see the item that specifically describes your Training, Experience or Interest, choose the item that describes it most closely.

**Parish-Wide Leadership:**

Most applicable to DCE and Deaconess Candidates.

**Parish Music:**

May apply to any candidate. Again, indicate areas accurately in terms of your Training or Experience.

**Administration:**

Most applicable to DCE, Deaconess or Colloquy candidates with previous teaching experience. An indication of Interest here in areas that require further education is informative to prospective Calling bodies.

**LCMS District:**

Indicate by numerical rank at least three districts in which you would definitely consider a Call. If there are special circumstances that restrict your availability to less than three, please discuss this with the Placement Director at your interview. "All of the Above" will suffice if one really has no preference. You may wish to consult a copy of the Lutheran Annual for an indication of what areas are included in such districts as Atlantic or Southern. NOTE: English District and the SELC (Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church) are non-geographic districts, i.e., their member congregations are spread out over the entire U.S.

**Community:**

Indicated by numerical rank at least three community types in which you would definitely consider a Call. Secondary teacher candidates should be aware that Lutheran High Schools are located primarily in Large Metro, Small Urban or Suburban settings.

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**Philosophy of Ministry Essay:**

**Type first in a separate Word document and SPELL CHECK then copy and paste it into your**

**Application.** Spend some time carefully thinking through your comments for this page. What you write here tells a prospective principal, pastor, or board member a lot about you and your professionalism. The Writing Center may be of assistance in terms of form, usage, grammar, etc. If you would like my input/comments, I would be happy to proof/edit it or assist in any way that I can short of writing it for you.

This page should be three or four paragraphs in response to the heading. For teachers, the bulk of this essay should focus on your philosophy of education. The tone of your writing should be professional, should avoid both floridity and the tendency to write what you think people will want to read here. Concrete examples from your student teaching, internship and/or field work experience should be included to illustrate the principles of your philosophy. You may wish to include factors that have influenced your choice of ministry area, your philosophy of teaching, some observations on the value of your particular ministry, or elements that you believe you will bring to a particular ministry setting or population. Writing about a particular person who influenced you in entering your area of ministry is, to be honest, probably overused. If the latter is done very well, it can be impressive; however, it is probably more effective to write something that indicates to the reader that you are ready to be a professional in your own right. **The people out there who are considering you as a candidate will pay close attention to what is written here!** This should be stellar in every regard.

Be certain that the material here has been proofread and is absolutely correct in grammar, spelling and punctuation. Spell-check only identifies words that are spelled incorrectly, not those which are spelled correctly and misused!

You may wish to approach the development of your philosophy by considering the following:

### ***Why do you want to Teach?***

- What is the purpose of a Christian education or ministry?
- What is your role as a Lutheran educator/DCE/Deaconess/Parish Musician?

### ***Whom are you going to Teach/be in ministry to?***

- Specifically, how will you reach the wide diversity of children that you will have in your classroom?
- How do you define your community of learners?

### ***How and What are you going to Teach/accomplish in your ministry?***

- What are your beliefs about how children learn?
- How will these beliefs impact your teaching? for example ...
  - classroom management
  - instructional strategies
  - curriculum design
  - assessment
- How do you balance the needs of individual learners with the needs of the entire class?
- What are your goals for your students?

### ***Where are you going to Teach?***

- How will you bring a global awareness into your classroom?
- What will be your relationship with the community, parents, teaching colleagues and administration?

As you write your philosophy, keep the following in your thoughts:

1. Your educational philosophy reflects your own approach to education; this philosophy should be based on your personal beliefs, which in turn should show an influence of college work, readings, and thinkers. Consequently, when appropriate, “drop names” in your philosophy. For example, “As Erikson, I believe that children go through a series of mini-crisis as they mature and it will be part of my task to assist young people in making these transitions.” However, be sure you understand the philosophy of the person being quoted since you may be asked questions about it at an interview.
2. Appropriate grammar is mandatory: among other things, be careful with the following:
  - Watch agreement – for example, “The student should do all of their work.”
  - Be sure to write using COMPLETE sentences.
  - Use only one idea for each paragraph and be sure to provide a transition between paragraphs. Use topic sentences.
  - Be aware if you change voice in the paper, i.e., “As teachers, we should treat the parents with respect; they need to understand that parents must be part of the solution.” Or “It is important for everyone to...thus you should not be critical of...”
  - Alternate the use of “she” and “he” to avoid the clumsy phrasing of “she or he”.
3. The following are some of the things that you can address in your philosophy
  - use of cooperative learning
  - management techniques
  - parent involvement
  - technology
  - diversity

4. Avoid using the same phrase over and over in your philosophy. For example, avoid using the word “teacher” several times in the same paragraph or near each other – check your thesaurus for alternative choices of words.
5. Your philosophy should be positive. While there may well be problems with our educational system, a prospective employer does not really want to hear how bad things are – they are interested in what you are going to do to make the classroom experience a better one for the students. You are writing a personal philosophy, not a critique of the educational system.
6. Avoid the use of jargon. If you do use “educational jargon”, explain how you are going to impact the student. For example, rather than writing “I strongly believe in inclusion. “write “I believe that inclusion is a key ingredient in the makeup of the classroom and I will support inclusion through practices such as using alternative assessments and preparing lessons which appeal to different learning styles.”
7. Avoid broad generalizations – while you may want to say “I believe that all children can learn” – the statement is relatively meaningless without examples of how you will put that into action.
8. Avoid overly complex sentences, vague or which offer sweeping generalizations.
9. Your philosophy should be POSITIVE – we know there are problems in education – we do not want to read about those in your own philosophy – rather we want to read how you will make a difference!
10. Some suggestions on word usage:
  - Instead of “Education should...” or “I will try...” be more positive and use “I will...”
  - Avoid the use of “I hope...” or “Hopefully...” for something more positive.
  - Rather than writing “In school students should experience...” use “In my classroom, students will experience...”
  - Instead of writing “Teachers will...” use “I will...”
  - Sentences in the same paragraph should begin with different words. Avoid I, me or my as the first word of a sentence.
11. Your philosophy is among the first things a prospective employer will see. The appearance of these documents is important.
12. Have someone review your philosophy for accuracy and eye catching appearance.

**Signature:**

Complete this item only after completing the entire form.

The Synodical Placement Credential is neither complete nor valid without your signature and date. Your signature here indicates that, to the best of your knowledge, the information provided in these pages is accurate, truthful and forthright.

A signed copy of the Application is required, please do the following:

- Type in your initials and the date
- Print one copy of page 6 only. Sign the hard copy and bring to your placement interview.

This will allow us to send copies of your documents directly from our database as an e-mail attachment or to a fax number. The hard copy with your signature will be retained in your permanent file.

**UPON COMPLETION:**

Please examine the application to be sure that your page breaks are in the correct places and that all information is clear and accurate. Although the content of these credentials are reviewed by the staff of the Office of Synodical Placement, the accuracy and quality of presentation of the information herein is solely the responsibility of the candidate. Further, any changes or updates of this information prior to or following acceptance of an initial Call are, likewise, the responsibility of the candidate.

Save your Placement Application on your computer. From the “FILE” menu, select “SAVE AS” Choose your preferred location from the listing under the “SAVE IN” window. For a file name, use (Your Last Name-Placement Application) e.g. Waldron-Placement Application.

Double-check everything before submitting information, close the Placement Application file and open the copy that you just saved to verify that the information was retained correctly. Send electronic file as an attachment to the Placement Office at crfplacement@cuchicago.edu. Make sure that **your name** and **placement application** appears as the subject of the email.

In addition to the electronic file submitted to the Placement Office, one signed hard copy of page 6 of your Synodical Placement Application is required.

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**Supplementary Pages for Director of Christian Education, Deaconess or Director of Parish Music:**

The information here will be somewhat repetitive of other information in your credential file; however, we have found it useful to provide a summary page for Call Committees to review. They can then search your credentials for more detail on what they find to be pertinent to the position that is being filled.

**✝ DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:**

**Certification:**

Indicate whether you are completing the single or dual certification DCE program.

**Specialization:**

Indicate the specialization that you are completing in your DCE Program.

**Field Work Experience(s):**

Indicate here each Fieldwork experience that you have completed. If all fieldwork was completed at the same site, please complete a separate section here for each semester's experiences.

**Internship:**

Indicate the site at which you completed your DCE Internship, the dates of your involvement and summarize your experience in the various categories of ministry which you experienced, i.e., JHS Youth; SrHS Youth, Singles, Outreach Program, etc. Your Internship evaluations will go into more detail.

Indicate the site supervisor's name, title and phone number.

**✝ DEACONESS:**

**Program:**

Indicate whether you are completing the Deaconess program as an undergraduate degree, as a Deaconess Colloquy student or as a candidate for Deaconess Chaplaincy (which includes the M.A.R. or equivalent degree).

**Minor:**

Indicate your Minor, as appropriate. If you are completing the program with an alternative minor, indicate your area of study as "Other".

**Field Work Experience(s):**

Indicate each Fieldwork experience that you have completed. If all fieldwork was completed at the same site, please complete a separate section for each semester's experiences.

**Internship:**

Indicate the site at which you completed your Deaconess Internship, the dates of your involvement and summarize your experience in the various categories of ministry that you experienced, i.e., CPE training, institutional or agency staff, parish duties, etc. Your Internship evaluations will go into more detail.

Indicate the site supervisor's name, title and phone number.



**DIRECTOR OF PARISH MUSIC:**

**Program:**

Indicate whether you are completing the Director of Parish Music program as an undergraduate degree, Masters Degree, or Colloquy Certification.

**Field Work Experience(s):**

Indicate each Fieldwork experience that you have completed. If all fieldwork was completed at the same site, please complete a separate section for each semester's experiences.

Indicate the site supervisor's name, title and phone number.



## Application Instructions for Colloquy Program Candidates

Congratulations! Now that you have finished the required course work and survived the exams, we are ready to get you on record as a candidate for a Divine Call as a Commissioned Minister.

The Board of Assignments requires that an initial Call into professional church work happens under the supervision of the Synodical Placement Director of the institution certifying the candidate. What this means is that, since you have now been certified by a committee of the Concordia University Chicago faculty through your Colloquy Exam, we can work to facilitate either a Call to the congregation or school where you now serve on a contract basis, or we can disseminate your candidacy information to congregations needing a person with your gifts. About ninety-five percent of the time, the Colloquy candidate receives a Call to the site they are already serving.

It should be understood, that the Call itself originates with the congregation or other Calling Body, not with the Placement office or by a candidate "applying for the job". By definition, a Divine Call is the means by which a worker is "summoned into service" - and the congregation is the entity from which the summons originates and is then sanctioned through the Placement office. The Lutheran understanding of the Divine Call and logistics of the Call process are explained earlier in this handbook.

The Synodical Placement Application is the means by which we record your willingness to enter into the service of the Church. This document, other required forms and instructions to open a credential file are available on the Concordia website at <http://www.cuchicago.edu/experience/student-services/synodical-placement/>. You will need to access a computer with Microsoft Word '97 or later to complete the application.

If you are anticipating on receiving a Call to your current place of service, you may submit a somewhat abbreviated version of the application. Please complete the form as follows:

- Page 1 All information requested
- Page 2 You may either attach a copy of your undergraduate transcript, or you may simply note that "Transcripts are available upon request" and then be willing to provide the information when asked. The Placement Office does not supply the copy for submission as part of your application.
- Page 3 All information requested as applicable
- Pages 4, 5 Complete only if you anticipate being placed to a site through the Placement Office, as in, "Here am I; Send me...wherever I'm needed." The information here will be of interest to potential Calling bodies.
- Page 6 Please complete as indicated. Your response should be limited to this page only.
- Page 7 Supplementary Page to be completed only if you qualify to receive a Call as a DCE, Deaconess or Director of Parish Music.

After completing, please examine your application and make sure that all information is clear and accurate (refer to the placement guidelines at: <http://www.cuchicago.edu/experience/student-services/synodical-placement/>). SAVE a copy of the application for your file. Send an electronic copy as an email attachment to [crfplacement@cuchicago.edu](mailto:crfplacement@cuchicago.edu). Make sure that your name and placement application are in the subject line of the email. In addition to the electronic file submitted, a signed copy of page 6 must be submitted to the Placement office. This page will need to be **printed**, signed and then submitted as a hard copy to Synodical Placement Office, Concordia University Chicago, 7400 Augusta Street, River Forest IL 60305, or faxed to 708-209-3079.

Thank you - I look forward to working through this process with you!

Mark Waldron, Director  
Office of Synodical Placement

Your Name  
7400 Augusta Street  
River Forest IL 60305

Date

Principal William Smith  
St. John Lutheran School  
4700 Concordia Street  
Forest River LI 50306

Dear Mr. Smith and Members of St. John:

**RECEIPT OF CALL DOCUMENTS**

I have received the Call documents from St. John for the position of fourth grade teacher.

It has been a pleasure speaking by phone with you and members of the Board of Education regarding this position. I want to assure you that I will give serious and prayerful consideration to this Divine Call. You can expect a definitive decision by xxxxxxxxxx.

**CALL ACCEPTANCE**

Please keep me in your prayers during the days ahead as I seek God's guidance in this matter.

After prayerful consideration, it is with excitement and great pleasure that I write to accept the Call from St. John to serve as your fourth grade teacher.

Our conversations have been both encouraging and helpful. I look forward to the teaching ministry to which God has called me as well as the opportunity to serve among his people at St. John. I can assure you that I will serve faithfully according to the gifts with which God has blessed me.

**If you have not officially graduated, include the following:**

Although I am indicating to you my desire to accept this Call and my intent to serve as outlined in the Call documents, I am aware that my assignment is considered official when I complete my work at Concordia with satisfactory academic and personal records.

If you need to contact me prior to my arrival, please feel free to call me at (xxx) xxx-xxxx. Please continue to keep me in your prayers as I continue to pray that God would bless our ministry together.

**DECLINATION**

After prayerful consideration, I must write to inform you that I have decided to decline the Call from St. John to serve as your fourth grade teacher.

I appreciated all the time you have taken to speak with me regarding this position and the prayers that you have offered on my behalf. In my prayers for discernment and wisdom in considering this Call, I have, however, [been unable to reconcile my desire to teach at the middle school level with the fourth grade position detailed in this Call].

I pray that God continues to bless St. John's ministry and guides someone to fill the position.

Kind regards,

Your Name TYPED and SIGNED