

***Application for Admission to the
Pastoral Colloquy Program of
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod***



Instructions:

The applicant shall prepare or obtain, as appropriate, all materials required for a complete application (*See Bylaws 3.10.2; 3.10.2.2; 2.7.2; 2.8.1; 2.8.2; and 2.9.1; 2013 Handbook*). This application package shall be assembled by the applicant and the district president and shall include the following:

- 1) _____ The applicant shall authorize the district president to request a complete background check through “Protect My Ministry.” The applicant shall tender payment for all “Protect My Ministry” fees with the completed authorization form to the district in which application is being made (fees are established by each district). A copy of this report (minus the Social Security Number) shall be provided as part of the application package.
- 2) _____ The applicant shall complete the form “Application for Admission to the Pastoral Colloquy Program...” (this present form). The applicant (plus, if married, the applicant’s wife) and the district president shall sign the application where indicated, or the application will be returned. The district president needs to indicate whether or not he would like the applicant to be placed in his district.
- 3) _____ In addition to the information required to complete the application form, the applicant shall prepare an **autobiographical statement** (see instructions in Section VI of the form below) setting forth clearly the applicant’s background and reasons for seeking admission to the Synod’s ministerium by colloquy. The applicant will also prepare **two theological essays** of approximately 1500-1800 words each (as instructed in Section VII of the form below).
- 4) _____ The applicant shall arrange for written testimonials, sent directly to the district president, which assess the applicant’s Christian character and life, personality, abilities

(especially in pastoral ministry), and previous service. These testimonials shall come from no fewer than three competent references who have known and observed the applicant for at least the two years immediately preceding his application. * Non-US Citizens will be required to provide proof of legal residency in the United States.

- 5) _____ If the applicant is actively serving in pastoral ministry or has previously served as a pastor, one of these testimonial letters must come from the applicant's ecclesiastical supervisor; if not, one of the letters shall come from the applicant's pastor. If applicable, the testimonial from the applicant's ecclesiastical supervisor shall assess the applicant's current or past pastoral service under his oversight, together with a declaration of the applicant's standing in the church body/denomination in which the supervisor holds membership. *
- 6) _____ The district president shall arrange for an interview of the applicant with an interview committee within the district. The report of the interview committee is to include a detailed assessment of the applicant's suitability, and a recommendation whether the applicant should be declared qualified (or not) for a pastoral call in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod upon completion of the colloquy process (See *Appendix One*). A written copy of this report shall be included in the application package. *
- 7) _____ The applicant shall arrange for transmission to the district president of official (original) transcripts from all colleges and seminaries he has attended. The applicant also shall furnish evidence of earned continuing education units (CEUs) and of other non-credit academic and professional experiences completed. The colloquy committee reserves the right to seek independent validation of credit. *
- 8) _____ The district president shall attach a cover letter to the application package which declares his strong endorsement and sponsorship of the applicant. The district president shall make sure all requested information has been provided and shall send the completed package with appropriate signatures, to the First Vice-President of the Synod as chairman of the Pastoral Colloquy Committee. The applicant (plus, if married, the applicant's wife) and the sponsoring district president must sign this application form where indicated.

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*All letters of recommendation, tests, or transcripts are to be sent directly to the district president by the individuals or schools providing them.

I – ELIGIBILITY

Only applicants who meet the requirements for eligibility as specified in the policies of the Colloquy Committee for the Pastoral Ministry will be considered for admission to the Pastoral Ministry by Colloquy. A valid application must identify at this point the category under which the application is being made in order for it to be considered by the Pastoral Colloquy Committee or the application will be returned. (The committee will make the final determination as to whether the application is being made under the appropriate category.) Please consider the following three categories:

- 1) **Active Pastors from Other Christian Church Bodies:** Men who, at the time of application are in good standing and in active service as pastors in another Christian church body/denomination may apply for colloquy. Such applicants must be graduates of a program of study that leads to ordination, from an accredited institution,* with no fewer than 60 semester hours (90 quarter hours) of required academic credit. Such applicants must also have served at least three years in a recognized ministry of their church body, and must supply suitable documentation of their active status and good standing in their current church body/denomination. Pastors of congregations that are not affiliated with a church body/denomination (are “non-denominational” or “independent”) also may apply, but must supply suitable references and documentation of their authorization to perform pastoral ministry. In all cases the academic requirements will apply.
- 2) **Men from Other Christian Church Bodies Who Have Prepared for Pastoral Ministry but, at the Time of Application, Are Not in Active Service as Pastors:** Such applicants must be graduates of a program of study that leads to ordination, from an accredited institution,* with no fewer than 60 semester hours (90 quarter hours) of required academic credit. Applicants with prior pastoral service must provide the date (month and year) and the reason (e.g. retirement, resignation, dismissal) their active service ended. References and suitable documentation will be required. Such an applicant also must have been a communicant member in good standing in a congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod for at least two years* immediately prior to the time of application. This category does NOT apply for LCMS members who while members of LCMS congregations have obtained Master of Divinity degrees outside the LCMS (see below).
- 3) **Licensed Deacons of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod:** Men who have been licensed by the president of a district of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to carry out, as a licensed deacon, the full responsibilities of the pastoral ministry in (a) congregation(s) of the Synod, and who have carried out these responsibilities for at least ten years,* may apply for admission to the pastoral ministry by colloquy. In all cases, such applications also must be accompanied by the recommendation of a congregation that holds membership in the Synod, on the basis of that congregation’s observation of and experience with the applicant. The application must also include written documentation from the congregation and the district president that the applicant actually has been

responsible for carrying out the full responsibilities of the pastoral ministry for at least ten years. Finally, to be considered by the committee, the application must be accompanied by the congregation's written commitment to extend a divine call for the applicant to become its pastor once the colloquy process is complete.

- * **Note:** Should the sponsoring district president be convinced that the Colloquy Committee for Pastoral Ministry ought consider, on the basis of an applicant's special circumstances, an exception to one of these specific eligibility requirements (asterisked above), the sponsoring district president must furnish with the application a written recommendation detailing the special circumstances and the rationale for the recommended exception. The Colloquy Committee, however, retains the responsibility and authority for deciding to grant or to decline the exception. The decision of the Colloquy Committee shall be regarded as final by all parties to the colloquy application.

LCMS Laymen and Commissioned Ministers

Other applicants for the ordained ministry, such as commissioned ministers of religion, laymen of a special ethnic or linguistic group, and laymen who have fulfilled at least 10 years of significant service in a congregation, will participate in special theological education ("alternate routes") under the direction of the seminaries. LCMS laymen and commissioned ministers who receive a Master of Divinity from a non-LCMS Seminary will also be directed to participate in an "alternate route" at one of our LCMS seminaries. All individuals who do not fit the three specific categories open for colloquy are directed to one of the seminaries of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Having considered the qualifications explained above, please check one of the three categories listed below and supply the indicated information (click on the grey box to enter information - please type the application):

_____ **1) I am at the time of this application a pastor in good standing and in active service as a pastor.**

Church Body/Denomination:

Date **(Month and Year)** of Affiliation with Church Body/Denomination:

Current Place of Service **(Name of Congregation/City/State):**

Date **(Month and Year)** Service Began:

_____ **2) I am not at the time of this application in active service as a pastor.**

Church Body/Denomination in Which Pastoral Credentials Were/Are Held:

Date **(Month and Year)** of Affiliation with Church Body/Denomination:

Last Place of Service **(Name of Congregation/City/State):**

Date **(Month and Year)** Service Ended:

Reason for End of Service **(Retirement, Resignation, Dismissal, Other):**

I am a communicant member of the following LCMS congregation **(Name/City/State):**

Date **(Month and Year)** Membership Began:

_____ **3) I am a Licensed Deacon in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.**

District of Licensure:

Date **(Month and Year)** License Issued:

Current Place of Service **(Name of Congregation/City/State):**

Date **(Month and Year)** Service Began:

(Any other applicants for the ministry not fitting one of the above three categories, such as commissioned ministers of religion, laymen of a special ethnic or linguistic group, and laymen who have fulfilled at least 10 years of significant service in a congregation, will participate in special theological education (alternate routes) under the direction of the seminaries. LCMS laymen and commissioned ministers who receive a Master of Divinity from a non-LCMS Seminary will also participate in an “alternate route” at one of our LCMS seminaries. All individuals who do not fit the three specific categories open for colloquy are to be directed to one of the seminaries of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.)

II – PERSONAL INFORMATION *(please click on and then TYPE in the gray box)*

Name:

Address:

Email Address:

Telephone #:

SS #:

(blocked after background check is complete)

Date of Birth:

Location:

Date of Baptism:

Location:

Date of Confirmation:

Location:

Married: Yes: No:

When:

Location:

Wife's Name:

Present Church Membership:
(congregation and denomination)

Are your children Baptized?

Yes: No:

Names and ages of children:

Age:
Age:
Age:
Age:
Age:
Age:



IV – EXPERIENCE

Present church body membership
(denomination, e.g. ELCA, SBC,
PCUSA, etc.):

From (date) To (date) : - Total Number of Years:

If this is a “non-denominational” church, please check here:

If there have been any changes in denominational affiliation in the past 10 years, please specify:

List pastorates, teaching positions, or business positions:

| | |
|--------|-------|
| Where: | When: |



V – MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Before recommending that a person be declared qualified and certified for public ministry in the church, the Colloquy Committee for the Pastoral Ministry must have assurance that the candidate is above reproach. Also, one of the objectives of the Synod is to “provide protection for the congregations, pastors, teachers and other church workers in the performance of their duties and maintenance of their rights” (LCMS Constitution, Article III 9). Your response to the following questions will help the committee fulfill its responsibilities in making its recommendation.

1. Have you ever been suspended or expelled by any educational institution? Yes: No:

If so, identify the institution and state the reason for such action:

2. Have you applied for admission to a program at any Synod institution? Yes: No:

If so, provide the name of the school, date, and disposition of your application:

3. Are you presently in good health? Yes: No:

If not, please comment:

Do you accept and believe what is taught in Martin Luther’s *Small Catechism*? Explain.

Do you now or have you ever had “charismatic” or “Pentecostal” experiences? Explain.

If you are a member of a congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, why do you wish to qualify for the pastoral ministry?

Have you ever been ordained in any other church body?

Why are you seeking admission to the *ministerium* of the Synod through the colloquy program?

What are your plans for financing your education?

For all applicants - if you are married, please ask your spouse to answer the following:

Are you also willing to be a member of a congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod?

What are your thoughts about your spouse becoming a pastor in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod?

List any concerns you may have:

Signature of wife: _____ Date _____

[If the applicant is married and the wife does NOT physically sign, the application will be returned. Simply typing in her name here is not acceptable.]

VI – AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

[Set forth clearly your background – family, ministry, theology – and your reasons for desiring to enter the ministerium of the Synod by colloquy. Be thorough but neither overly long or too brief – between 1500 and 2000 words is about right. Use the space below and any additional pages necessary.]

VII - THEOLOGICAL ESSAYS

[To help you prepare for a potential interview, please write two essays of approximately 1500-1800 words each. In the first essay, please explain why the “six chief parts” of the Small Catechism are fundamental to Lutheran theology. In your second essay, please summarize what you believe regarding the theology of the Word of God, the person of Christ, justification by faith, the nature of faith and the work of the Holy Spirit, and the Biblical theology of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Use the space below and any additional pages necessary.]

