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# **SAMPLE LETTER: TO PASTOR AND CONGREGATION**

Dear Pastor and Congregational Council,

A member of your congregation has applied for a rostered ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. Your partnership in identifying and supporting the development of leaders for mission in our church is an important one in the ELCIC. Active membership in a congregation is an essential beginning for potential candidates as we lift up persons who have a commitment to Christ and a willingness to serve in response to the needs of this church.

While all members of our congregations are involved in ministry in daily life, one of your members has expressed an interest in theological education and preparation for rostered ministry. Discernment of this call is a process that will benefit from the support and assistance of the pastor and members of your congregation. The time invested in helping this applicant explore gifts for ministry will be of value to the church, including your own congregation. Open conversations regarding the expectations of our leaders as well as the potential for service as a pastor or deacon are essential. Resources to assist you in the discernment process can be recommended by the synod Candidacy Committee. The applicant is asked to talk and pray with you as part of the discernment process.

Recommendation by the congregation is one of the first steps in registration for candidacy. Please read the enclosed material carefully, fill the recommendation form out completely and honestly, and return it promptly. You are encouraged to discuss the written responses with the applicant as a step in the process of discernment. This information assists the Candidacy Committee in assessing the applicant's readiness for candidacy and provides a context for understanding issues concerning continued growth and development throughout the candidacy process. Once you have recommended an individual, the responsibility to evaluate and determine entrance into candidacy rests with the Candidacy Committee of your synod.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada gives thanks to God for your partnership in identifying and lifting up persons for leadership in this church. May God's strong spirit fill your congregation with prayers of support for this applicant and for all those involved in the candidacy process of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

Faithfully,