



9.

**ANNUAL DEVELOPMENTAL INTERVIEW FORM
— CANDIDATES FOR DIACONAL MINISTRY**

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone Numbers:: _____

Present church membership: _____

Church address: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Return this completed form to: _____

(Name)

(Address)

(E-mail)

Please return this form no later than: _____

(Date)

You are encouraged to make a copy of this material and bring that copy to the interview meeting.

Introduction to Annual Developmental Interview

The purpose of the annual developmental interview is to strengthen the relationship between candidates and the Candidacy Committee by checking in with the candidate on progress being made in the candidacy process. The interviewers shall assist the candidate with developing growth goals for the coming year. Each person's self-understandings and attitudes are unique. Every person can grow in self-understanding and can improve his/her relationships with others.

The interview shall commonly be conducted by two members of the synodical Candidacy Committee and last approximately one hour. The interview shall be conversational in style. The interview team shall make recommendation to the Candidacy Committee regarding the candidate's endorsement.

Before answering the questions on the next page, please reread the standards for diaconal ministry which are included at the end of this form.

This process is intended to offer you an opportunity to reflect on your development toward meeting the standards. The interview team will discuss with you the responses you submit to the questions. Part of the discussion will be to mutually confirm your learning, formation and development goals for the coming year.

You are encouraged to make a copy of this material and bring that copy to the interview meeting.



Annual Developmental Interview Form — Candidates for Diaconal Ministry RESPONSES

Name: _____

A. Read the Standards for Diaconal Ministry.

B. Respond to the following questions:

1. Identify some of your areas of strength:

2. Identify some of your areas for growth:

3. Describe some learning and development that has happened for you during the past year:

4. What are your goals for the coming year?

5. What are your plans for spiritual, personal and vocational formation for the coming year?

6. Comments and questions for the Candidacy Committee:

Standards for Diaconal Ministry

The ELCIC is a church *In Mission for Others*. The ELCIC recognizes the emergence of a renewed emphasis upon God’s mission in the world in the 21st century. Christians enter into partnership with God’s work in the world through baptism into the body of Christ. Every faith community is part of a mission field. Every baptized Christian is to be an ambassador for God’s mission in the world. Through Word, Sacrament and service, individuals and communities are strengthened for mission. Rostered leaders are called to equip the saints for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:12).

A mission-oriented leader can be defined as someone who:

- is rooted in the gospel;
- is knowledgeable, passionate, able to articulate his or her faith and the confessional teachings of the ELCIC; and
- through the church participates in God’s mission of love, redemption, justice and reconciliation.

People who have discerned a call to diaconal ministry will demonstrate and build upon the characteristics of a missional leader. The ELCIC seeks candidates for diaconal ministry who demonstrate certain competencies. The candidacy process provides educational and formational opportunities to integrate skills, knowledge and tools for ministry in five interrelated areas:

- Spiritual and Personal Formation
- Vocational Awareness and Diaconal Identity
- Adherence to Lutheran Theology
- Missional Awareness and Cultural Context
- Capacity for Public Ministerial Leadership

It is important to keep in mind that these areas are interrelated, as per the diagram below.



The competencies listed here have been identified to assist committees in the assessment of a candidate’s formation throughout the steps in candidacy. The ELCIC values the diverse experiences, gifts and skills that individuals bring to rostered ministry.

Spiritual and Personal Formation

Deacons shall demonstrate personal faith and emotional maturity. Formation is an ongoing process before, during and after candidacy that requires practising personal spiritual discipline through prayer, Bible study, worship, reflection and active membership in a congregation or synodically recognized ministry of this church. Deacons shall demonstrate commitment to lead a life worthy of the gospel of Christ and exemplify faithful service and gracious living.

The ELCIC places a high value on strong interpersonal skills. These skills shall be lived out in the exercise of leadership, in acts of service, in the practice of spiritual care, in public witness and as a public representative of this church.

Key competencies in this area include the skill to:

- Maintain a disciplined life of prayer and personal devotion.
- Demonstrate passion and imagination for sharing the gospel.
- Take responsibility for one's own actions, admit mistakes and take appropriate corrective measures.
- Listen to people's stories and assist them with interpreting their experience in light of the gospel.
- Practice wellness in one's personal life.

Vocational Awareness and Diaconal Identity

The grace of God revealed in Jesus Christ means that all the baptized, as members of a universal priesthood of believers, are called to a vocation of mission in their daily lives. Deacons are called to a public ministry that is accountable to the wider church and offers leadership for helping people to engage in God's mission through service. This calling has internal and external dimensions—both an individual sense of call and an affirmation of call by the wider church. A letter of call to serve in a particular ministry setting is received and accepted prior to ordination.

Diaconal ministry is public ministry of Word and Service. Deacons take on a role and identity as deacons¹ and as leaders. This calling includes serving and leading in ways that proclaim the gospel and help others participate in God's mission. Diaconal service focuses on the whole person, and includes being attentive to the need for advocacy and social justice. Deacons are to be grounded in community with other deacons and committed to a common calling which serves as a reminder and model for building community in all ministry settings. The call to diaconal ministry is a lifelong commitment that supports and complements the ministry of Word and Sacrament, and equips the baptized for ministry.

Deacons shall demonstrate a willingness to serve in response to the needs of the church, voluntarily place themselves under the legitimate authority and discipline of this church, and assent to the polity of this church. Deacons must covenant to abide loyally by the constitution, administrative bylaws and enactments of this

¹ All deacons ordained by the ELCIC have the right to use the title "Deacon" or "Reverend Deacon." In respect of our history, we honour those who continue to use the title "Diaconal minister" or "Deaconess" or who prefer to be addressed as "Sister." (*Reimagining Our Church - Public Ministry in the ELCIC*. 2019)

church and of the synod under which they serve.² They are called by God through the church for a ministry of servanthood and not for the exercise of domination or coercive power. Faithfully living out this calling requires a commitment to lifelong learning.

Key competencies in this area include the skill to:

- Reflect theologically on the connection between diaconal and personal self-understanding.
- Reflect theologically on God's mission through the church and in the world, with particular attention to contexts where church and world overlap.
- Encourage and equip individuals and communities to live out their vocation/calling.
- Maintain a relationship with a diaconal community.

Adherence to Lutheran Theology

Deacons are expected to be committed to the Scriptures as the inspired Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions of this church. This commitment is demonstrated in a life of discipleship. They shall use their understanding of Lutheran theology and history in service, teaching, public witness, spiritual care and the practice of diaconal ministry.

The ELCIC expects deacons to teach, uphold and interpret both scripture and this church's confession of faith. This requires a broad and comprehensive knowledge of scripture, Lutheran Confessions and Lutheran theology. It also requires knowledge of the theological, social and institutional history of the Lutheran tradition and how this history informs mission in the current context. The understanding of Lutheran tradition is connected to the wider Christian tradition and to interfaith relationships in our current context.

Key competencies in this area include:

- Broad knowledge of the Scriptures and an ability to interpret scripture using a gospel and missional lens.
- Broad knowledge of the Lutheran Confessions, theology, church history and tradition.
- A demonstrated ability to integrate doctrine and practice.
- Ability to communicate insight from Lutheran theology and tradition.
- Basic knowledge of Christian history and various faith traditions.

Missional Awareness and Cultural Context

Mission occurs in cultural context. Participating in God's mission includes studying issues in contemporary society in the light of the Word of God and responding publicly to social and moral issues as an advocate for justice and an agent for reconciliation. The ELCIC expects deacons to be leaders in understanding, studying and engaging contemporary culture and social issues. Reflecting on context, deacons shall draw on insights from a variety of disciplines including the arts and humanities, the natural and physical sciences, and the social sciences, along with insights from theology.

² *ELCIC Constitution Article IX Section 2.* The Constitution includes a Confession of Faith (Article II) and articulates an understanding of the Nature of the Church (Article III) and of the Mission of the Church (Article IV).

Deacons are called to give particular attention to contexts where the mission of the church interacts with the needs of the world. *Diaconal ministers reach out to the excluded and marginalized on behalf of the church and bring their experiences into the midst of the community of faith. Thus the church and its mission are solidly grounded in the world, its hopes and fears, its joy and suffering.*³ Deacons carry public responsibility to speak for the needs of God's world to the church, and to apply God's saving gospel to the needs of the world through the actions of God's people both individually and collectively. Deacons are committed and prepared to equip the baptized for ministry in the world and in the church, including encouraging and supporting people in ways to participate in God's mission through service, accompaniment and advocacy.

Deacons are called to function with respect in diverse cultural contexts and learn from a variety of people and experiences. This includes an understanding of the history of Indigenous peoples and the work of reconciliation in the Canadian context. Deacons shall help people discern God's activity in various contexts and support communities in identifying possibilities for mission through service, witness and advocacy. The ELCIC values the ability of deacons to carry out ministry in ecumenical and interfaith partnerships.

Key competencies in this area include:

- Ability to help others reflect on their own context and experience.
- Ability to relate theology with history, context and culture.
- Skill in addressing cultural differences.
- Ability to foster awareness of community needs and encourage others to participate in action and advocacy, especially with those most vulnerable in society.

Capacity for Public Ministerial Leadership

Deacons shall offer leadership for mission to both the church and the wider community. They are expected to help people discern God's mission, and equip and send disciples into the world. Deacons have knowledge of the ELCIC's structure and governance processes, and carry responsibility for helping church structures build up the body of Christ through effective communication, reporting, administration and leadership.

Diaconal ministry is a public ministry of Word and Service. Deacons shall have demonstrated competence and expertise in an Area of Specialization.⁴ Deacons may serve both within and outside of congregational settings, in each case bearing responsibility for making connections between church and world. A diaconal call within a congregational setting shall be marked by a focus on extending the witness of the church into the larger community.

Deacons shall model the life of Christ-like service by addressing all forms of human need with commitment that supports and complements the ministry of Word and Sacrament, focusing on ministry to the whole person. An ability to equip people for serving is essential, including the ability to assist with reflecting on how acts of service are connected with their own faith experience, with the faith experience of others and with God's story. While preaching is not the primary focus for deacons, they shall be prepared to preach, when invited, as part of the calling to make connections between church and world. Deacons shall express spiritual care through listening, prayer, conversation, empathy, reflection, accompaniment and advocacy.

³ Final Statement, LWF global consultation on *The Diaconal Ministry in the Lutheran Church*, São Leopoldo, Brazil, 2-7 November, 2005.

⁴ A non-exhaustive list of Areas of Specialization for Diaconal Ministers is in the ELCIC Candidacy Manual, Section C, Addendum 4.

Strong professional ethics supports the credibility of public ministry, promotes trust within communities, and helps create a safe space for spiritual care and the sharing of stories. The ELCIC places a high value on maintaining confidentiality and respecting boundaries.

Key competencies in this area include:

- Expertise in an area of specialization.
- Ability to serve in ways that address human need and demonstrate care for the whole person.
- Ability to equip people for serving by addressing all forms of human need and by demonstrating care for the whole person.
- Ability to encourage people to reflect on the connections between acts of service, their own faith story, the faith story of others and God's story.
- Skills in communication and conflict management.
- Leadership skills for developing vision, making plans and administering organizational accountability.
- Ability to work in partnership.
- Mentoring skills to help the community tell stories of faith and live a Christian life.