

# Prepare for a Church Work Vocation

**VOCATION:** a summons or strong inclination to a particular state or course of action; especially, a divine call to the religious life.

“It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up...” (Eph. 4:11-12)

God’s people join together around Word and Sacrament, reaching out to a lost world. Dedicated, faithful workers assist and lead people in participating in the fulfillment of the Great Commission, building up the Body of Christ. The vocations given in this brochure represent some of the many ways in which you can serve the Church in its vital ministries.

## PASTOR

Martin Luther wrote, “There is no more precious treasure, no nobler thing on earth, than a pious, faithful pastor or preacher.” As a pastor, you will be looked to as both shepherd and servant of God’s flock. Through you, on a daily basis, God will carry out his most wonderful work, that of saving the lost.

As you care for the members of a congregation, you will be active in preaching, teaching, administering the sacraments, visiting members, comforting the sorrowing, giving godly counsel, and providing a vision of outreach. You may also serve as a military or institution’s chaplain, a foreign missionary, a church administrator, an educator, or a campus pastor.

Preparation for this calling requires four years of undergraduate study, preferably with a Christian liberal arts emphasis, followed by four years of theological study at a seminary.

## TEACHER

As a Christian teacher your life will be dedicated to the exciting and enriching experience of participating in the development of searching minds and the formation of personalities. You will partner with pastors and parents in the joy and satisfaction of being God’s instruments in training children for a life in service to Jesus Christ.

The most common opportunity for a teaching ministry is found in serving in a Lutheran preschool, elementary school or high school. In addition, you will be able to use your gifts and talents in coaching, school or church music programs, adult education, youth programs and/or administration.

The education of a Christian teacher leads to state and church certification. You will attend college for four or five years, during which time you will work under supervision in actual classrooms.



## *DEACONESS*

Deaconess means “servant.” As a Christian woman you are given the gifts to serve in a unique way, both within and outside the church. A life of service as a deaconess enables you to use your God-given gifts to nurture His people. Your vital tasks as a deaconess include spiritual care, teaching God’s Word, administration, and social service. You will accomplish these tasks in a variety of arenas: parishes, hospitals, welfare institutions, college campuses, inner cities, and foreign mission fields. This is a flexible vocation that can be tailored to your gifts, vision, and calling as God enables.

Certification as a deaconess follows one to four years of study (depending on previous education), majoring in theology with an additional area of special interest, followed by a year of internship.

## *DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN OUTREACH*

As a Director of Christian Outreach you are a valuable member of an outreach-oriented ministry team. Your primary function is to stimulate, educate, mobilize, and support parishioners in witnessing, evangelizing, and assimilating new members. You might also serve in a mission congregation or develop cross-cultural outreach in the United States or on a foreign mission field. In addition, there are opportunities for you to serve in specialized service such as campus ministry or church planting.

Your program of study requires four years of higher education and one year of internship that will prepare you for the variety of skills needed in the fields of evangelism and missions.

## *DIRECTOR OF PARISH MUSIC*

Music is a delightful, noble gift of God, one of His gifts to His people that we offer back to Him in praise and worship. As a Director of Parish Music, you will use your talents and spiritual sensitivity to enhance the musical life and worship experiences in the congregation you serve.

You will give leadership to choirs, bands, and soloists and be involved in planning church services. Whether you serve part-time or full-time you will play an integral role in the life of the church and, by enhancing your congregation’s love for communal worship, effectively proclaim the Gospel.

Your program of preparation requires four years of study along with a practicum in an area church.

## *LAY MINISTER*

Ministry is a team effort. The lay minister, as one of the members of a congregation’s team of leaders, works under a pastor’s guidance and direction in a great variety of ways, depending on talents and area of specialty. Your position description could include evangelism, visitation, Christian education, youth work, senior ministries, parish administration, assimilation and spiritual gifts administration, and other applicable ministries.

The four-year course of study for a lay minister includes a major in theology and involves an internship or practicum.

## DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

As congregations grow and adapt to changing demographics in a mobile society, DCE's are needed to provide vision and leadership in coordinating the church's various educational missions. This can involve all ages. The DCE nourishes children, youth, adults, and family groups in Christian instruction and fosters growth in personal faith.

In time you will be qualified to lead, supervise, administer, coordinate, train and instruct in the various educational activities in the congregation you serve. Based on your gifts, you may also specialize or assist in counseling, music, or worship.

Academic preparation leading to certification as a Director of Christian Education involves four years of higher education plus one year of internship in a congregation.

## PARISH NURSE

As a parish nurse you will serve as a member of a local congregation ministry team by linking your community's medical and spiritual resources to make church members aware of health issues, disease prevention, and wellness. You will educate church members on health issues, act as a liaison for referrals to community resources and social services, provide home and hospital visitation, and comfort and assist through prayer. You will also seek opportunities to use your ministry to reach out to the community.

The program of study is built on the concept of reaching out to the whole person and helps you to create a healing environment to nurture the body, mind, and spirit of the individual, just as Jesus did.

To qualify for this program (whether by distance education or on campus), you will be a registered nurse, spiritually mature, devoted to holistic health, a good communicator, and active in the congregation.

## SOCIAL WORKER

As a social worker you will be dedicated to helping people function within their environment. Social work demands skill in human relations, sensitivity, and a concern for people facing adversity. You will be making a career of bringing Christ-centered love and hope to the hurting and hopeless of society, and devoting yourself to binding spiritual wounds through the means of Christian and secular social work agencies.

The course of studies for a Lutheran Social Worker includes four years of classes interspersed with supervised field experience in local agencies.

*Okay, I'm interested.  
Now what?*

But the Lord said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a child.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the Lord.

Jeremiah 1:7-8



## Where should I go to prepare for a church work vocation?

### **Colleges/Universities:**

Concordia College  
Ann Arbor, MI  
(800)253-0680  
[www.ccaa.edu](http://www.ccaa.edu)

Concordia University  
River Forest, IL  
(800)285-2668  
[www.curf.edu](http://www.curf.edu)

Concordia University at Austin  
Austin, TX  
(800)865-4282  
[www.concordia.edu](http://www.concordia.edu)

Concordia University  
St. Paul, MN  
(800)333-4705  
[www.csp.edu](http://www.csp.edu)

Concordia College  
Bronxville, NY  
(800)937-2655  
[www.concordia-ny.edu](http://www.concordia-ny.edu)

Concordia College  
Selma, AL  
(334)874-5700  
[higher-ed.lcms.org/selma.htm](http://higher-ed.lcms.org/selma.htm)

Concordia University  
Irvine, CA  
(800)229-1200  
[www.cui.edu](http://www.cui.edu)

Concordia University  
Seward, NE  
(800)535-5494  
[www.cune.edu](http://www.cune.edu)

Concordia University Wisconsin  
Mequon, WI  
(888)628-9472  
[www.cuw.edu](http://www.cuw.edu)

### **Seminaries:**

Concordia Theological Seminary  
Ft. Wayne, IN  
(800)481-2155  
[www.ctsfw.edu](http://www.ctsfw.edu)

Concordia University  
Portland, OR  
(800)321-9371  
[www.cu-portland.edu](http://www.cu-portland.edu)

Concordia Seminary  
St. Louis, MO  
(800)822-9545  
[www.csl.edu](http://www.csl.edu)

**Board for Higher Education**  
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
1333 S Kirkwood Rd ~ St. Louis MO 63122-7295  
314-996-1254 800-248-1930 ext. 1254  
<http://higher-ed.lcms.org> e-mail: [higher.ed@lcms.org](mailto:higher.ed@lcms.org)

