



# **Sustainable and Vital Congregations: Discerning and Planning for the Future**

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Central States Synod

# The Church is in Transition

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Rostered Ministers of Word & Sacrament (from 2001-2021)

- 2002: 17,749
- 2022: 15,197
  - Added to Roster: 5,790
  - Removed from Roster: 8,342
  - Total Decrease in Roster: 2,552

# Rostered Leadership is changing

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## Rostered Ministers of Word & Sacrament

- Retirements have increased dramatically
- High rate of younger rostered leaders leaving the ministry
- Seminary Enrollment down significantly
  - 2019 Entranced Candidates: 465
  - 2022 Entranced Candidates: 186

# Central States Synod is Changing



Total Congregations 2002: 203

- Number of congregations today (2024): 151
  - Border: 32
  - Central KS 43
  - Eastern MO 26
  - Osage: 22
  - Western KS 28

# Central States Synod is Changing

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- Number of Congregations with fulltime pastor: 50
- Number of Congregations with parttime/shared leader: 101
  - Number of Congregations served by SAM/PMA: 39
  - Number of Congregations that are part of a parish: 48
- Open Congregations: 32
  - Fulltime: 6
  - Parttime: 26



# The Church is Changing

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What does this all mean?

- For the
  - ELCA?
  - Central States Synod?
  - Your congregation?
  - You as a leader?



# The Church is Changing

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Small Group conversation:



What does this all mean for us?

When you think about leadership in your congregation what are your wishes, wants & needs?

# Ministry of the Baptized People of God

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C7.11.

This church affirms the universal priesthood of all its baptized members. In its function and its structure this church commits itself to the equipping and supporting of all its members for their ministries in the world and in this church. It is within this context of ministry that this church calls some of its baptized members for specific ministries in this church.





# Rostered Leadership

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Two Types of Rostered Leaders:

1. Word and Sacrament (Pastor)
2. Word and Service (Deacon)

# Rostered Leadership

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C7.21.

- Within the people of God and for the sake of the Gospel ministry entrusted to all believers, God has instituted the office of ministry of Word and Sacrament. To carry out this ministry, this church calls and ordains qualified persons.

# Rostered Leadership

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7.31.02. Responsibilities: Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:

1. preach the Word;
2. administer the sacraments;
3. conduct public worship;
4. provide pastoral care;
5. seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
6. impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through available channels of effective communication;
7. witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; and
8. speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.

# Rostered Leadership

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## 7.31.02. Responsibilities.

- b. Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
1. offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
  2. relate to all schools and organizations of the congregation;
  3. install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council;
  4. with the council, administer discipline;
  5. endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization and the synod; and
  6. encourage adherence to covenantal relationships with this church as expressed in the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

# Rostered Leadership

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C7:50: Ministry of Word and Service.

C7.51. This church calls and receives onto the roster qualified persons to provide a ministry of Word and Service, exemplifying the life of Christ-like service to all persons and creation: nurturing, healing, leading, advocating dignity and justice, and equipping the whole people of God for their life of witness and service within and beyond the congregation for the sake of God's mission in the world.

# Rostered Leadership

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C7.61.02. Responsibilities. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:

- a. be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;
- b. advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world; (11-2024) ELCA CONSTITUTION—CHAPTER 7 / 45
- c. speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations;
- d. equip the baptized for ministry in God's world that affirms the gifts of all people;

# Rostered Leadership

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## C7.61.02. Responsibilities cont.

- e. encourage mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;
- f. practice stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents, and resources;
- g. be grounded in a gathered community for ongoing diaconal formation;
- h. share knowledge of this church and its wider ministry of the gospel, and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and
- i. identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel

# Rostered Leadership

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Prior to ordination, all rostered leaders must go through candidacy to insure proper education, contextual training and formation.



# Parish Ministry Associate Program Legacy

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- Nearly 35 years in the Central States Synod
- Dual purpose for lay leadership
  - equipping people for their own ministry as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries
  - identifying and nurturing the gifts God has given God's people for public ministry, so that that good news can be shared among all people
- These purposes overlap, but remain important distinctions

# What does a PMA do?

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Lay leaders equipped in their own ministry as God's servants and stewards:

- Serving local in their congregation and/or community
- Congregational leaders (administrators, teachers, musicians, etc.)
- Nurses, Public educators, Engineers, Lawyers, Civil servants, and all kinds of passionate people

Public ministry, sharing the good news among God's people:

- Pulpit supply, at home and elsewhere
- PMA Certification: A symbol of confidence
- Synod Authorized Ministry (SAM): ELCA polity/Holy Communion
- Most of our SAMS are PMAs
- More people becoming PMAs in order to serve under authorization in their congregation

## Step 1: Enrollment

- a) Application and fee, faith journey essay, Congregational endorsement
- b) Safe Gatherings abuse prevention training and background check
- c) Interview with members of the PMA Team

## Step 2: Coursework (typically over 3-4 years)

- Lutheran Worship
- Lutheran Confessions
- Old Testament
- New Testament
- Ethics (theology)
- Preaching
- Christian caregiving
- Elective (history)
- Elective (free)

## Step 3: Certification

- a) Final interview and certification
- b) Recognition of PMA in congregation
- c) Annual report and Continuing education



# What does it take to become a PMA?

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# How much does it cost?

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Our Central States Synod PMA program works with several academic partners:

- Select Learning, Inc. (online, self-paced)
- Bishop Kemper Sch. for Min. (Topeka; weekend intensive, campus or online)
- Bethany House of Studies (hybrid)
- Luth. Sch. of Theology, St. Louis (online)
- Neighboring synod programs and more!

Tuition cost over all 9 courses tends to average around \$2000-\$3000 plus books

## Scholarship Reimbursements!

For every course successfully completed, an enrolled PMA student may submit an application and 50% of the course fee will be reimbursed to the payee (student, congregation, etc.)

So, if a student applies for the scholarship after every class, the total cost for the program would only be \$1000-\$1500 plus books.

The cost of books depends entirely on the specific classes taken, but may be around \$300-\$500 for the whole program.

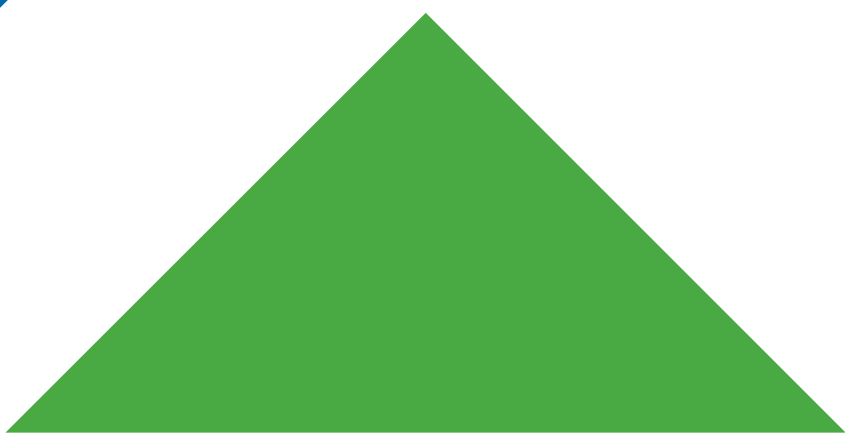


# Check out the PMA Program

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Visit our website:  
[css-elca.org/pma](https://css-elca.org/pma)

Or email Pastor Adam Wutka:  
[pastoradamtlbwy@gmail.com](mailto:pastoradamtlbwy@gmail.com)



# Leadership Models

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Empower Congregations to do Ministry

Collaboration

Bi-Vocational Leaders

Multiple Leaders for multi-point parishes

Sharing leadership

Non-paid leadership.