

Mentor Relationships
Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA
Revised November 2003

Overview

The role of the mentor is that of one helping another make the transition from theological education into public ministry and assimilating a newly rostered leader into the life of the conference and synod. The following is a brief description of the possible roles of a mentor; however this is not meant to be limited to just these items.

The Mentor

- is involved in a one-to-one relationship with a newly rostered leader as they enter into ministry;
- is a teacher, collegial friend and one who will observe and maintain trust as appropriate to a collegial relationship;
- meets with the new rostered leader on a regular basis that would be mutually agreed upon by both; it is recommended that they meet bimonthly;
- is a source of support for the newly rostered leader and his/her spouse and family;
- is likely to help the newly rostered leader discover the values, characteristics and operations in the local community, conference and synod;
- can assist the newly rostered leader with the practical pieces of ministry (hospital calls, bereavement visitation, completion of the parochial report, church council management, worship planning, financial management, tax preparation, etc.);
- refers newly rostered leader to counseling and/or other social/helping agencies as deemed appropriate;
- is to encourage and model integrity.

Guidelines

- Prior to the selection of a mentor, contacts with the newly rostered leader will be made by the Conference Dean and/or the Conference Assistant to the Bishop or his/her designee.
- The selection of a mentor is required of all first-call rostered leaders in the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod during the first six-months of the first call. The relationship should continue for the three-year period of FCTE.
- The newly rostered leader selects his/her own mentor in consultation with the Coordinator for Theological Education.
- The mentor may report to the Coordinator for Theological Education on a yearly basis.

- If either the mentor or the newly rostered leader need to dissolve the relationship between them, that should be discussed with one another in consultation with the Coordinator for Theological Education. Other arrangements will then be considered.
- It is recommended that a pastor/mentor be responsible for only one newly rostered leader in this kind of relationship during the three year FCTE program.
- The mentor relationship, although required of all first-call rostered leaders to the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod, is strongly recommended for all leaders new to the Northwestern Pennsylvania Synod. In addition, Authorized Lay Worship Leaders, some seminarians, and other pastors are encouraged to call upon an ordained, experienced, and trusted pastor of the synod to serve as their mentor.
- A mentor is not primarily a spiritual director, pastoral counselor, confessor, or your pastor.

Characteristics and Qualifications of an Effective Mentor

- Committed to the Mission of the Gospel
- Leads a prayer-centered lifestyle
- Is a rostered leader of the NW PA Synod, ELCA * Good-spirited, joyous, positive by nature
- Supportive of the ELCA and the NW PA Synod
- Demonstrates excitement and curiosity about the call to ministry
- Comfortable with the different styles of ministry and worship
- Comfortable with self
- Ability to state that he/she does not know all of the answers
- Committed to continuing education
- A builder of trust and collegiality
- Able and willing to commit to the time necessary for an effective mentor relationship

This guideline document was reviewed and revised by FCTE participants, pastors serving as mentors and the Coordinator for Theological Education. For more information, or for copies of the Mentor Covenant Forms, contact Pastor Sandra Jones (sjones@nwpaelca.org) or the synod office.