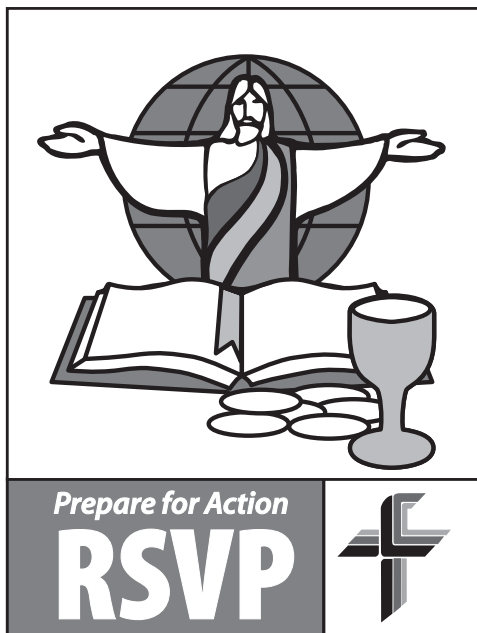


Church Worker Recruitment Initiative





Church Worker Recruitment Initiative

Prayer for Church Workers

Oh God
who has chosen us
to make disciples of all nations and
who by Baptism
has called us to build up your church,
we earnestly implore you to choose
from among us, your children,
many pastors and church workers
who will love you with their whole heart
and will gladly spend their entire lives
making you known and loved by all.
In Christ's name we pray.
Amen

Foundations for Service

Nurturing the Future Church Worker

Focus statement: *God prepares future pastors and deacons for action in professional church work through a process that begins in the home, continues in the local congregation and culminates in centres of higher education at the church's university or seminaries.*

On Sunday, January 23, Lutheran Church–Canada will again conduct a Synod-wide recruitment effort to identify and encourage our future church workers. This date was chosen because of its proximity to the festivals of St. Timothy and St. Titus and Jesus' call of His disciples to leave their nets and become 'fishers of men.'

As you can see from the focus statement we want to stress that the call into church work is normally a process. It begins in the home, continues in the local congregation where future church workers are nurtured in the faith and culminates in the church's schools of higher education. The plan for the recruitment initiative for the next three years follows from this statement:

January, 2000 *The Christian Home Grows Young Servants*

January, 2001 *The Christian Congregation Nurtures Growing Servants*

January, 2002 *The Church's Schools Prepare Strong Servants*

This booklet contains materials for *RSVP 2000*, the recruitment initiative for the coming year. Over the last two years, more than 160 names have been nominated from 43 congregations. We are grateful for all who submitted names and also for those congregations who participated in the initiative even though no names were nominated.


The materials include bulletin announcements and inserts, sermon resource materials, Bible studies and follow-up instructions and forms. Once again, we ask that interviews be made during the month of February and names sent to President Mayan at the end of the month. In the case of children or youth who are nominated, parents should be advised of their nomination and be present during the interview. The initiative should be fully explained so that parents are fully informed.

Please send in all names nominated, even if they were nominated in previous years. Receiving a nomination two or three years in a row can be tremendous encouragement for a prospective church worker.

RSVP materials from previous years are available from the LCC national office or from the LCC website at www.lutheranchurch-canada.ca/RSVP.

Thank you in advance for participating in this very important project. The harvest is great, but the labourers are few. Let us pray and work together to identify, recruit and nurture those labourers whom the Lord has chosen to work in His Kingdom.

Yours in service to Christ,


Rev. James Fritsche, project coordinator

Prepare for Action – **RSVP 2000**

Schedule

January 16

- distribute bulletin insert: *Listening to God's call through His people* (page 6)
- include bulletin announcement (page 7)
- make verbal announcement regarding the initiative

January 23

- use alternate lessons and suggested hymns (page 12)
- conduct adult and youth Bible studies from the materials provided (pp. 17/21)
- read letter from President Mayan to congregation (page 8)
- include bulletin announcement (page 7)
- distribute bulletin insert: *Church Worker Vocations / nomination form* (pp. 9 & 10)
- collect completed nomination forms in offering
- use responsive prayer for church workers (page 11)
- preach sermon: (pp. 13-16)
- use prayer of thanksgiving (page 12)

February

- interview nominees and complete interview form (pp. 24 & 25)

March

- send completed interview forms to Synod office in Winnipeg

Listening to God's call through His people.

Hannah dedicated her child **Samuel** to the Lord and he became a great prophet of God. (I Sam. 1:22b)

Philip's four **daughters** were among those who spread the Good News of Jesus. (Acts 21:9)

An **uncle** recently encouraged his **nephew** to become a pastor and he is now studying for the ministry.

A **grandmother** spoke to her **grandchildren** and prayed faithfully for them to serve the Lord and one became a teacher and later on a missionary in His service.

What **son, daughter, grandchild, niece, nephew** or **member** of your congregation can **you** encourage to prayerfully consider studying to become a full-time servant of the Lord as pastor, deacon, or missionary?

There may be young people in your family or in your congregation who:

- display a love of the Lord
- show love toward people
- desire to serve their church
- help in Sunday school or VBS
- are active in the youth/young adult group
- are intelligent and fun-loving

Speak to them, encourage them to consider that God's will for their lives may be full-time service in His kingdom.



Prepare for Action – RSVP 2000 is a recruitment initiative of Lutheran Church–Canada which asks members of congregations to identify men and women whom they believe have the gifts and talents for church work vocations.

**LUTHERAN CHURCH–CANADA**
ÉGLISE LUTHÉRIENNE du CANADA

Bulletin announcements

January 16

Where do you find a good pastor?

Ask most pastors and they will tell you that one of the greatest influences to follow God's call into the pastoral ministry was the encouragement they received from the people in their congregation. Next week our congregation will participate in a Lutheran Church–Canada initiative to identify men and women in our congregation whom God may be calling to be church workers. Look around today and see if there is someone you feel God may be calling to serve Him in full-time church work.

The opportunities for church workers are growing. Every year new pastors, teachers and directors of parish services find fulfilment in following God's call to serve Him.

However, there are currently approximately 40 parishes without pastors and many parishes are looking for additional church workers for specialized areas of ministry such as youth/young adult ministry and visitation.

God calls workers from among His own people, including the members of *YOUR PARISH NAME HERE*. Ask God who you can encourage to consider serving Him in full-time church work and be prepared to share that name next Sunday.

January 23

Whom is God calling?

Today we are asking members of *INSERT YOUR PARISH NAME HERE* to bring forward the names of men and women whom you feel God may be calling to full-time church work. The nomination form in today's bulletin outlines the qualities you look for in a potential church worker.

In that past two years Lutheran Church–Canada's recruitment initiative has gathered more than 160 names, including *INSERT NAMES SUBMITTED FROM YOUR PARISH* from this congregation. Each person was interviewed and he or she received encouragement from the pastor and LCC's university and seminaries.

God calls workers from among His people. As a young man, our pastor was nurtured and encouraged in his home congregation. Today is your opportunity to ensure that when parishes need pastors or deacons, there is someone ready to accept the call. Currently there are approximately 40 LCC parishes without pastors.

Ask God whom you can encourage to consider serving Him in full-time church work, fill in the nomination form, place it in the offering plate, and remember those people in your prayers as they consider God's plan for their lives.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

All of you know the story of young Samuel. He was a special gift of God to his parents, a child given in answer to prayer. Whenever Hannah looked at her little boy, I am sure her mind journeyed back to Shiloh, to her prayer and encounter with Eli. Here was God's answer to her prayer. Do you think a prayer of thanksgiving may have formed on her lips? I think so.

As Samuel grew up, she no doubt told him the story and began instilling in him a love for the Lord, for His Word and work. Was Samuel one whom God would call to serve Him in a special way? Hannah sensed he was and she nurtured him with the promises of God, preparing him for that day when he would begin his formal priestly training with Eli. What a wonderful job she must have done. The Bible tells us that Samuel began at an early age to prepare and to "minister to the Lord under Eli the priest."

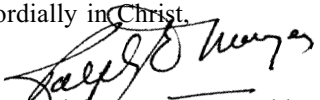
Samuel's story is the story of how God continues preparing future pastors and deacons for action in the church. It's a process that begins in the home with loving parents like Elkanah and Hannah who in loving the Lord share that love with their children. They recognize them as special gifts of God, taking seriously their parental stewardship. They pray for and with their children; they feed them with the Word and promise of God given in Jesus Christ. They help their children to consider how they might serve God with the gifts and abilities He gives to them.

This year's synodical recruitment initiative, *Prepare for Action – RSVP 2000* accents the Christian home. We pause to thank God for Christian parents everywhere and for all they do in bringing children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We also want to encourage them in this vital work, helping them to recognize the important role God has given to parents in preparing servants for the Lord, some of whom may be called at a future date to be like Samuel and enter into full-time service in the church.

Is it possible that some of those future full-time servants might be in your congregation? Indeed it is and you can help identify some of them. Look around in your congregation and in your congregation's families. Are there one or two whom you think God might be calling to serve Him as a pastor or deacon? Share that name with your pastor so that together as family, congregation and Synod we can nurture and encourage them as they consider how they might serve Christ and His Church.

May God continue to bless you and your congregation. May He fill you with every spiritual blessing so that with boldness you might declare the wonderful deeds of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvellous light.

Cordially in Christ,



Rev. Ralph E. Mayan, president

LUTHERAN CHURCH–CANADA

Church Work Vocations

Pastor

A candidate for the pastoral ministry begins his journey as an active member of a Lutheran Church–Canada congregation or a partner church, showing evidence of his commitment to Christian ministry, being of good character, enjoying satisfactory health, and demonstrating pastoral suitability.

Upon completion of a three- or four- year undergraduate degree in any discipline, students apply to a seminary for their pastoral education. The four-year seminary program for Lutheran Church–Canada is offered at Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, and Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines.

Students wishing to enrol in a seminary find it helpful to take a broad liberal arts program at the university/college level. Courses to include are English, speech, humanities, philosophy, social sciences, natural sciences, and psychology. Introductory courses in Greek and Hebrew prior to seminary are also needed.

Prepared pastors – servants called and sent by the Holy Spirit – witness to salvation by grace through faith in Christ Jesus and serve in God’s world.

Deacons

Director of Parish Services

Serving in a team ministry with the pastor, staff, and members of a congregation, a Director of Parish Services offers skills in evangelism and outreach, parish education, hospital and elderly visitation, and youth/young adult ministry.

To become a Director of Parish Services, a student completes a Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in Religious Studies and a minor in Parish Services, together with certified practical experiences and a year of internship.

Students enrol in the Director of Parish Services Program at Concordia University College of Alberta, Edmonton.

Teacher

Elementary and secondary school teachers are prepared for service in Lutheran Church–Canada by way of the Lutheran Teacher Colloquy program. Teachers are equipped to work in Lutheran schools where the primary goal is educating and nurturing children within the context of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



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Prepare for Action – RSVP 2000

Qualities to look for

To give some idea of the kind of person who might respond well to Christ's call as a professional church worker, please keep these qualities in mind:

1. Intelligence and health

The Church looks for people of average to excellent intelligence and good health. One who can appreciate and communicate the Gospel of Christ. One who possesses the energy and ability to continue the mission of Jesus.

2. Integrity

The Church looks for people of strong character and virtue. One who demonstrates honesty in relationships and in work. One who possesses sound moral values.

3. Service

The Church looks for people who are interested in, or are already involved in service to others. One who shows an interest in people and cares about the welfare of others, especially those in need. One who can relate well to others.

4. Love of Christ and the Church

The Church looks for people who are willing to express their love through prayer and service. One who demonstrates an interest in the Church and relies on God in his/her own personal life.

After prayerful consideration, I believe that this person has the qualities needed by a future church worker. Perhaps Jesus is calling him/her to this particular path of discipleship.

NAME: _____

Please supply additional information if it is known.

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ **AGE:** _____

YOUR NAME: _____

Please place the completed form in the offering plate.



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LUTHERAN CHURCH–CANADA
ÉGLISE LUTHÉRIENNE DU CANADA

Litany for Church Workers

O God, the Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in all:

Have mercy upon us.

O God, the Son, Who is the Saviour of Mankind, and Head of the Church:

Have mercy upon us.

O God, the Holy Spirit, Who has brought us to faith through Baptism and the Word:

Have mercy upon us.

We humbly confess, O Lord, that we have not always appreciated the gifts of pastors, Christian teachers, directors of parish services, and other church workers which You have given to Your church:

Forgive us Lord.

We humbly confess, O Lord, that we have often relied on others to identify and encourage prospective workers for Your vineyard:

Forgive us Lord.

We humbly confess, O Lord, that we have not looked as carefully as we could have at our own abilities to see if perhaps You might be calling us to be Your gift to Your church:

Forgive us Lord.

Quicken our hearts, O Lord, to remember Your great love for us and all mankind which moved You to provide salvation and peace in Your Son, Jesus Christ:

Move us by your Spirit, Lord.

Open our eyes, O Lord, to the great need for workers to lead Your church in bringing this Good News to all people:

Move us by your Spirit, Lord.

Broaden our vision, O Lord, to ways in which we can be used by You to help provide workers whom You would use:

Move us by your Spirit, Lord.

Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend ourselves. Make us Your servants for Jesus' sake. Use us in Your service to the praise of Your holy name.

Amen.

Worship Resources

January 23, 2000

Theme: The Christian Home Grows Young Servants

Alternate Lessons

Old Testament: Deuteronomy 6:4-9
Epistle 2 Timothy 1:1-7
Gospel Mark 1:14-20

Suggested Hymns

Hark, the Voice of Jesus Calling 318 (LW)
Send Now, O Lord, to Every Place 316 (LW)
“Come, Follow Me” Said Christ, the Lord 379 (LW)

Prayer for January 23, 2000

Dear Lord, we thank You, for You continue to call faithful labourers into Your harvest. Bless all those whose names we are receiving today that they may be led to consider the call to serve You as future pastors and church workers. Grant them the wisdom to understand Your will for their lives. And, if it be Your will, lead them to respond to the call to full-time service in Your church, to the glory of Your Holy Name, and for the expansion of Your Kingdom; for You alone are the Lord, and with the Father and the Holy Spirit are one God, now and forever. Amen

Sermon for January 23, 2000

Text: 2 Timothy 1:1-7

Theme: God calls leaders through people

The entire Scriptures is a record of God providing leaders for his people – leaders in the home, leaders in the church, leaders in the community. Because God is a gracious and a caring God He knows that His people flounder if they do not have good leadership. God continues to provide leaders for His church today in order that His plan of salvation can be carried out. It is the will of God that all people everywhere will know His love and the undeserved forgiveness of sins that comes through the blood of Jesus Christ. It is part of God's plan that this message is carried by people – human flesh and blood people – who themselves know the weight of sin in their lives and also know the joy of having Jesus as the One who died for them and who gives them the sure hope of life forever after death

Throughout the Scriptures we see how God has used different methods to raise up leaders. He called Moses with a burning bush. He used a large fish to recruit Jonah as a missionary. He appeared to Saul (Paul) in a blinding light. At times He used dreams and visions. It is an interesting record in the Scriptures about the various ways that God used to call individual people to serve as leaders for His people. In all of these different ways, God also used other people. After the blinding light on the road to Damascus it was necessary for Paul to meet with people for a time in order to learn about the Christian faith. God still uses this method to raise up people today. In our text for today, the Apostle Paul says that he is an apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will. Paul also says that he serves with a clear conscience as his ancestors did. The ancestors of Paul were an influence in his life. He refers to Timothy as his son in the faith. Somehow God used Paul as an instrument to help Timothy to grow in his faith in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of his sins. There are also references to Timothy's grandmother and his mother Eunice. So, in the life of Timothy there were a number of people involved who helped him not only to develop in his faith, but also then to be called into the ministry of the church. There are references in the text to the laying on of hands. At some time in the life of Timothy the larger church recognized that God had called him to serve as a leader, and set him aside, or consecrated him to serve as a leader in the church.

[At this point in the sermon you can mention the people who influenced you in becoming a pastor or deacon in the church.]

(In my own life certainly the greatest influence for me was my father who was a pastor and my grandfather who was a pastor, as well as my uncle and older brother. Seeing these people in the ministry, travelling around with my father as a young boy when he visited people and gave them private communion, certainly was a great influence in my life. But besides the family, there were other people who would make comments to me and say that I should consider becoming a pastor.)

Today it is important that in every congregation, members look around and identify people who are potential leaders for the church, either pastors or deacons

Every Christian is called by God to faith. This call comes through the working of the Holy Spirit in the preaching and teaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This call for all Christians to be servants comes through their baptism and is reaffirmed constantly in the body and blood of Jesus in holy communion. Every child of God is called by God to serve Him and share the good news of Jesus Christ. Every one who has been called into the faith also has to ask the question, “Does God want me to serve as a leader in the church?” Every Christian needs to ask themselves that question and we need to ask each other this question. Does God want you to serve as a leader in the church – either as a pastor or a deacon? Not every one is able to answer ‘yes’ because not everyone is called to be a leader, but the question should be asked of everyone.

What are the qualifications that a person should look for in himself or herself, or in other people? It would be a mistake to look for special abilities and intelligence. In fact, it almost seems as though one of the qualifications necessary to be a leader in the church is to be convinced that you are not qualified and that your own abilities do not give you the right to become a leader in the church. What is really essential for anyone to be a leader in the church is that they recognize their own sinfulness, their own unworthiness and their total dependence upon the blood of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins. This is necessary because the real mission of the ministry of the church is to proclaim this beautiful sweet gospel of Jesus Christ. Moses certainly wasn’t qualified to be a leader. In fact, he said he couldn’t speak. Saul (Paul) hated and killed Christians. Certainly he was not qualified. Jonah ran away. Isaiah was a man of unclean lips. In our text for today Paul says it is the Spirit that gives us power, love and self-control. If there is anything we need to look for in a person to be a leader is that the spirit of God has given them the strength and the power to serve and a tenderness of love and care for other people, as well as some self-control. In leadership it is very important to have the help of the Holy Spirit to be able to control ourselves in time of panic or depression or passion.

How do I know if God has called me to be a leader in the church? I am not sure if there is any time when one who serves as a pastor or deacon in the church can be absolutely, positively sure that God wants them to be a leader in the church. In fact, it seems as though all of our ministry is filled with some doubt and apprehension and we need to be convinced time and again by God that it is His will that we serve in leadership positions in the church. Certainly one way of finding it out is to test it. If the Spirit of God has laid upon your heart the call to become a leader in the church, then you should talk about it with other people and test it out to see if they affirm it or not. The second test would be to take the training offered by the Church. The final test comes when we are actually in the

ministry and can determine whether or not God uses us to communicate the Gospel to other people.

In our text for today, Paul says that he is thankful to God for having called Timothy to be a leader in the church. It is important in all our congregations that we publicly express our thanks and praise to God whenever He provides us with a pastor or deacon to serve in the church. It is this attitude of thankfulness for the office of the public ministry that encourages more people to want to consider whether or not God is calling them into service in the church. Of all the things we can do with our life, there is really nothing that has more honour or is more of a privilege than spending our whole life proclaiming to other people the powerful message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ – changing people’s lives by proclaiming to them the name of Jesus in a caring way.

It is the very nature of faith itself that it comes from outside of us as a gift from God. It never comes up from within us. This faith is brought to other people through people speaking to them the message of salvation in Jesus Christ. To have the privilege of being an instrument of God in bringing the most powerful thing into the lives of other people is certainly an honour and a privilege. It is something that should be considered by everyone who has been called by God into the Christian faith. The whole purpose for God in raising up leaders is so that the good news can be proclaimed. We do not teach people ten ways of how they can be saved. It is not a message ‘if you believe in Jesus you will be saved’. It is the message ‘You have been saved, believe it!’ When Christ on the cross said, “It is finished,” He meant that it is finished. The total price has been paid for the forgiveness of our sins. So now we proclaim to people something that has been completed and done. Your sins have been forgiven. Believe it because it is true.

There are people on this earth who do not know that their sins have been forgiven. There are people who know and do not believe that their sins have been forgiven. For both of them, they need to hear again and again the message of the love of God that is unconditional and unending, that comes through His Son, our Lord and Saviour.

Everyone called by God through the Spirit to this faith is now sent to speak this to others. However, it is necessary that there be those called to be leaders in the public ministry in order to proclaim this on behalf of the whole church and in order to equip all the members to be missionaries proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ. It is essential for the life and the mission of the church that there be those who are called and placed into the public ministry. It is not an optional matter for the church to have pastors and deacons. It is essential to the mission and ministry of the church that there be those called and placed into this position through the laying on of hands. We live at a time in our church when there is a real shortage of leaders in the public ministry. There is no doubt that our church

is suffering because of this lack of leadership. At this time, as at any time, it is essential for those of us in the church – grandmothers, mothers, those of us already in the office — to look at those that we know in the church and to encourage people to consider the call from the Holy Spirit to serve as leaders in the kingdom of God.

Prayer is an essential part of the process. Our Lord Jesus says the harvest is great, pray that there be more labourers. It is essential in our personal life, and in our public life, that we constantly include prayers to the throne of God, that Jesus who sits at the right hand of the Father would continue to carry out His ministry of sending pastors and teachers and evangelists for the equipping of the saints to carry out the mission of the church.

Pray for yourself. Pray that God would make it clear to you whether or not you should consider the call into the public ministry. If God has provided you with a faithful pastor, be sure to thank God and to thank him. If God has called you into this ministry, also thank God, because it is by His grace and His mercy that any of us are allowed to serve in this wonderful privilege of being partners with God in proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. If you have been called by God, you cannot wait until everything is in place, or before you have all the abilities, before you accept the call. It is important that when the call comes, you accept it and say, “Yes Lord, here I am, send me, send me.” God never asks us to do something without also providing us with the means to do it. God never called anyone into the ministry of the church without also providing them with the strength, the power, the love and the self-control that is necessary for them to carry out their leadership roles. God very seldom provides this ahead of time, but He provides these gifts and He keeps His promises as we serve Him and as we accept the call.

May the Holy Spirit move all of you to consider a call from God to serve as a leader in the church. May the Holy Spirit also move all of you to look around, if you have not been called by God, that you would identify someone in the congregation who should consider a call from God to serve in the church. God will answer our prayers as He has since the Lord Jesus lived and walked on this earth, He will always raise up leaders because He will not leave His people helpless, floundering around without leadership. God will do this not because we deserve it, but because He truly wants to carry out His plan of salvation. He will continue to do it the way He has always done it, and that is through people in His church — all this so that more people can know His love, the forgiveness of sins and the sure hope of life forever in Jesus Christ. Amen

Adult Bible Study

Sunday, January 23, 2000

Nurturing the future church worker

FOCUS STATEMENT

God prepares future pastors and deacons for action in professional church work through a process that begins in the home — the Christian home grows young servants.

Hymn 318 (LW) “Hark, the Voice of Jesus Calling”

Prayer - page 130 (LW) “For the Increase of the Holy Ministry”

It Began in the Home

1) Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

The Christian home acknowledges, the Christian’s God, the God of the Bible, the one and only true God. This is the God we fear, love, and trust above all things. This is the God for whom the Christian home grows young servants , recruits sons for full-time pastoral ministry and every person for the deaconate ministry of the Church. This is the God who calls for our allegiance.

2) How is the true God described in the text? See v.4 (Hebrew: YAH WEH)

3) Review the First Commandment in Luther’s Small Catechism ..pages 55-60

“That which has first place in our hearts and lives is truly our God”. Discuss other deities that frequently call for our allegiance: piety, money, popularity (young people are particularly led by the God of popularity. This god’s name is also *macho*. Young people want to ‘fit in’, be ‘one of the crowd’ or just ‘be cool’. Not be labelled a *nerd*). Sports (we force kids into a game they may not even like, because we want them to be another Gretzky). There are other gods like success, logic — (I don’t know what the Bible says, but I think ...).

All these deities boil down to one. . . self is the only false God.

The text in Deuteronomy is an important historical announcement. It is the Hebrew Creed, similar to what we call our Apostle’s Creed.

“Hear O Israel: The Lord Our God, The Lord is ONE.”

This is known as the SHEMA (pronounced Sheh-mah) *hear, listen and remember...* not just in one ear and out the other; let it stick, sink in, compute and become part of your very bones.

4) In what sense is our God unique? In what sense jealous?

5) Discuss the command given in verse 5. What does God require and deserve? (Compare Deut. 10:12; Joshua 22:5; Mark 12:30) Why do you think this is regarded as the greatest commandment? Explain and discuss “heart”, “soul”, “strength.”

We love Him because He is the God of our: *creation* – He provides and protects and *redemption* – In love He sent His only begotten Son, Jesus, in Whom alone we have forgiveness of sins and new life (2 Cor. 5:14, 15). Our respectable middle-class lifestyle does not save us. Calvin Kleins and Corvettes do not deliver the good life. “Being cool” does not guarantee eternal fellowship with the One True God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is also the God of our *sanctification*. By His Spirit through Word and Sacrament He called us to faith and empowers us to live the Christian life (see Gal. 2:20).

6) How are we to receive these commandments? (Compare Ps. 119:1; Luke 2:51; Rom. 10:8; Col. 3:16)

7) How are these commandments to be communicated? vv 7-9, (Pr. 22:6; Eph. 6:4). Engage in spiritual talk. (e.g. Emmaus disciples, Luke 24:19)

8) Christian education begins in the home. It is an ongoing process. When it is done faithfully, how might it encourage and excite our sons and daughters to train for professional church work?

9) Read 2 Timothy 1:1-7 and discuss these questions:

a) What role did the home play in Timothy’s spiritual journey?

b) “Fan into flame the gift of God.” What does this say to you about recruiting church workers?

c) What confidence and assurance are Church workers given in v.7?

10) Read Mark 1:14-20

a) “the time has come.” In what sense is there an urgency to “enlist” future church workers?

b) Who really calls (recruits) church workers?

c) “At once they left and followed Him.” Notice the willingness on the part of those who followed. But also notice, there was no objection to the “call of Jesus” on the part of father Zebedee. What objections do parents, and even those who may be called have to full-time church work?

Closing hymn and prayer

Suggested Hymn #316 (LW)

In your prayer thank God for His Word on the importance of the Christian home and its vital role in recruiting church workers. Pray that God might move, inspire, more homes (parents) to encourage their sons and daughters to seriously consider serving the Lord and His church — *full-time!*



Prepare for Action – RSVP 2000 is a recruitment initiative of Lutheran Church–Canada which asks members of congregations to identify men and women whom they believe have the gifts and talents for church work vocations.

LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA
ÉGLISE LUTHÉRIENNE du CANADA

Youth Bible Study

Sunday, January 23, 2000

What has your family done for you lately?

When you read the title above, did you say to yourself, “Lots! My family provides me with food, protection, love, support, education, clothes and all sorts of stuff. I mean, if it wasn’t for my family, how would I get to hockey practice or to this weekend’s concert?” Or did you think more along the lines of: “Not much. We spend more time yelling at each other than listening, no one understands me, and what I say, do or look like is never good enough. Sometimes I would rather have no brothers or sisters and maybe a different set of parents.”

Okay, whichever scenario you find yourself in (or if it is somewhere in between depending on the day) this Bible study is for you. One of my favourite things about the Bible is that it does not tell us about a bunch of perfect people whom we are supposed to act like. No way! It tells about the lives of people who sinned, especially in family situations. Thankfully, God’s Word also tells us about how He forgave people for the stuff they were sorry for, and He promises to do that for us today. So, let’s look at some specific situations in the Bible and in our own lives.

First, some examples of family problems in the Bible. Review the rivalry in Joseph’s family beginning at Genesis 37:2. First of all, his dad played favourites so that ticked his brothers off. After a series of events, we read that instead of killing him, the brothers sell Joseph into slavery. (Genesis 37:18-28) A few chapters later, Joseph is second-in-command over all of Egypt and he could take some serious revenge on his brothers. What does he do instead, and why? (See Genesis 45:1-15.)

Read about Moses, Miriam and Aaron in Numbers 12. (Yes, the whole chapter! It is only 16 verses!) Wow! You would think that Moses would get defensive but instead he asks God to have mercy on his sister. Not our usual reaction when one of our siblings gets jealous and starts bad-mouthing us, or cutting down our friends or the choices we make.

Even Jesus had problems with His family. In John 2:1-5, Mother Mary volunteers Him (without asking first) to help out with a wine shortage at the wedding in Cana. His brothers thought He was “out of His mind” in Mark 3:20-21.

Try to think of two more instances in the Bible where families were having a rough time. Be sure to figure out how God made something good come of the situation in the end.

Now let's shift gears to a couple of positive family examples in the Bible. After all, families were God's idea in the first place! Flip in your Bible to the book of Ruth and read through the first chapter. In verses 15-17 we see how strong a family tie had become, and how Ruth is converted to her mother-in-law's faith in God. The story ends well; Ruth marries again and has a baby boy who will be the grandpa of King David, which places them in Jesus' family tree.

Our most important family for today's Bible study is Timothy's. In the Apostle Paul's second letter to a young pastor named Timothy, he says, "I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also" (2 Timothy 1:5). This passage tells us of the greatest gift that family can share with one another. Most likely Tim's mom and grandma not only talked about God's love, they must have lived out their faith in very obvious ways for Timothy to take hold and want to become a pastor. God had given the gift of faith to Timothy and blessed him with a family life where he grew in the understanding and exercising of his faith.

Look up the words of Deuteronomy 6:4-9 where God gave His people instructions to show how important it was to pass on to the next generation the love of God and His commandments. What a huge task God gave to our parents. Some of you might be parents in the next 10 years and this will be your job. Scary thought maybe!

Finally, take a look at your family when you go home today. Instead of asking the question that began this Bible study, ask, "What can I do for my family, for my church, and for others to express my thanks to God?" Please pray for your parents and brothers and sisters. Find ways to express your repentance, forgiveness and love to them. Look at the faith that is (or is not) shared by members of your family and take an active role in being a Christian brother or sister to your family members. Encourage others when they show God-given talents. Don't hide your gifts, use them in a way that gives thanks to God. Maybe even plan to serve in some way at your church this week and in the years to come because you are loved by God more than you can imagine. We need each member of the body of Christ to tell others of the forgiveness and hope that we have for families, friends and those we will never meet in this lifetime.

Close with prayer!



Prepare for Action – RSVF 2000 is a recruitment initiative of Lutheran Church–Canada which asks members of congregations to identify men and women whom they believe have the gifts and talents for church work vocations.

LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA
ÉGLISE LUTHÉRIENNE DU CANADA

Faith & Family Word Search

O C u P s e v e i l e b J e s u s p u H
 N c v Q l P z d P b p y P b M h t i a f
 T X e O J m F w D e u t e r o n o m y π
 W H z l L H s s e n t i w l s e v o l H
 w C i y p i h s r o w E F r e P C f b r
 f s t h U P C D y l i m a f s H a y B b
 o i p S W H U Σ β Σ O p z u l a β u n r
 r s a e A g p Á Q t s Z e g U L p v l o
 g t b x g l † h J χ Σ K β s F B i Σ n t
 i e P Á S L d L q Q W A F O s i h F a h
 v r Y X g r a n d p a r e n t s s T c e
 e n e r d l i h c e L o i s A m r i o r
 n T o b b Y c k u h G K F W o r e m n U
 e U r h d a e c i n u E ú i n i d o f j
 s B l n e C h g o o r l Á B B c a t i j
 s R u t h Á e g a r u o c n e G e h r f
 f r i e n d s L j t J o s e p h l y m i
 Z L l S t t s C i S F y o F w O l p a g
 B v h l π d p a r e n t s l b i D C l H
 b I L e e r u t a m R H e j C G n R M t

Deuteronomy	Timothy	faith	love
Eunice	baptize	family	mature
Jesus	believe	fight	parents
Joseph	brother	forgiveness	sister
Lois	children	friends	teach
Moses	confirm	grandparents	witness
Paul	encourage	leadership	worship
Ruth			

Prepare for Action – RSVP 2000

Pastor's Interview and Evaluation Form

One of the key elements in identifying and encouraging future church workers is the follow-up by the pastor. There are two important aspects of the pastor's follow-up:

- 1) an interview with each person suggested on the nomination forms, and
- 2) the submission of those names to President Mayan for referral to the appropriate institution for future follow-up.

Pastor's Interview

After you have received the nomination forms, take a moment to thank God for each name submitted and ask for His guidance during your interview. The following are suggestions to help you in the interview:

1. Phone to set up the appointment. The person may already be aware that the congregation has been asked to submit names of future church workers. Inform the person that he/she has been identified by fellow church members as a possible future church worker and that you would like to meet to discuss this with him/her. (In the case of children or youth who are nominated, parents should be advised of the nomination and be present during the interview. The initiative should be explained so that parents are fully informed.)

2. A good place to begin is with the four qualities (see nomination form) which others have seen in this individual which have led them to suggest his/her name as a future church worker. You might want to ask: "Do you see yourself in this way?" "Have you ever considered a church work career?" "Are there areas here at church where you would like to become involved?" (e.g. teaching Sunday school, helping with VBS, acolyte, hospital visitation, lector, altar guild, etc.)

3. Share with the person some of your own joys in the ministry. What pastoral tasks do you enjoy? What has been truly rewarding? How have you seen others grow in faith? When was a time when you felt you really made a difference in someone's life? Help them to see different opportunities for ministry as a pastor, a teacher, a director of parish services, a missionary, etc.

4. Ask for permission to share their name with Concordia University College or one of our seminaries: "I'd like to let our seminaries know that you have been identified as a possible future church worker. Is that okay with you?" (Explain that they would receive information from the seminaries or college.)

5. Before you leave, take a moment to pray with the individual, giving thanks to God for the opportunity to discuss the work of the church with this person.

Submission of Names

Following your interview, please fill out one "Evaluation Form" for each person you interview. (Please photocopy additional forms as needed.) The evaluation forms then should be sent to President Ralph Mayan by March 1 (if possible). It would also be appropriate to phone those who submitted names, thanking them for their participation and letting them know that you interviewed the person they suggested.

We thank you for your participation in this effort. The task of recruiting future church workers is not the task of the pastor alone, but of all God's people. It is our prayer that we can help all our people accept greater responsibility in identifying, encouraging and supporting our future professional church workers.

Prepare for Action – RSVP 2000
Interview Evaluation Form

Date of Interview: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Age: _____

Home church: _____

Pastor: _____

1. Is this person's level of interest: (circle one) Low Medium High ?

2. For which church work profession is this person most suitable?

3. What impresses you about him/her?

4. How do you see this person in his/her relationship...

a. to the Lord?

b. to the church?

5. Please include any other matters you would like to share.

Return this form to:

Lutheran Church–Canada, 3074 Portage Ave, Winnipeg, MB R3K 0Y2

This recruitment initiative is based on a program *Called By Name* developed by the Archdiocese of Winnipeg.

Project Coordinator: Rev. James Fritsche, third vice-president, Lutheran Church–Canada on behalf of the Council of Presidents and the Board for Higher Education

Sermon: Rev. Dr. Roy Holm, president, Lutheran Church–Canada, Central District

Adult Bible study: Rev. Murv Kentel, seniors'/visitation pastor, First Lutheran Church, Kelowna, B.C.

Youth Bible study: Henrietta Schaeffer, director of parish services, Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Kitchener, Ontario

Design and Layout: LCC Communications

All elements of this booklet are available in Adobe Acrobat format on the Internet at:

www.lutheranchurch-canada.ca/RSVP2000

For further information call 1-800-588-4226.



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