

## **SMP Admission Requirements for English District Candidates**

The LCMS endorsed the Specific Ministry Pastor Program (SMP) at the 2007 Convention. The document, Admission Criteria for the Specific Ministry Pastor Program, (on Synod's website at <http://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/Pastoral%20Education/SMPAdmissionsCriteria.pdf>) provides the following detail on this topic. Three areas are covered by competence exams which the seminaries administer online (OT Content, NT Content, Christian doctrine). Regarding the remaining four competencies it states: "Entry-level competency in worship, preaching, spiritual life and Christian witness, and teaching the faith will be demonstrated by portfolio submissions". Furthermore, "In most cases these competencies will be achieved through courses offered in District and other programs." Given our non-geographic status, we are not equipped to have district-wide courses, so we have adopted the following approach to meet this requirement.

1. To demonstrate "[a]n understanding of the mission of the church" the candidate should
  - a. Read the CTCR document: A Theological Statement of Mission (1991) <http://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/CTCR/ctcrmission.pdf>
  - b. Write a two to five page statement expressing his understanding of and commitment to the mission of Christ to seek the lost. Included in the statement should be one or more examples of how he has shared the Christian faith with a non-Christian.
  - c. In order to provide a sense of his spiritual life, he will duplicate the brief description of his personal faith and spiritual discipline required for the SMP application.
  - d. Append a brief comment by the proposed supervising pastor as to how the candidate's understanding of the mission of the church and personal spiritual life will be fostered and further developed during the SMP process of pastoral formation.
  
2. To demonstrate "[a]n understanding of worship leadership appropriate to his ministry context" the candidate should
  - a. Option 1:
    - i. Read 1 Corinthians 14:26-40; 1 Timothy 2-3; 2 Timothy 2:22-26 and 4:1-5; and the Augsburg Confession Articles 4,5, 7, 15, and 24 and the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article 4 (paragraphs 48-58), Articles 7 & 8; and Article 15.
    - ii. Write a 1-2 page statement explaining his "understanding of the role of a worship leader as related to the pastoral office" and describing his experience in worship leadership (as lay assistance, musician, etc.).
    - iii. Append a comment from the proposed supervising pastor as to the candidate's ability in leading an order of worship from one of our hymnals or a training plan which will enable the development of such competency in worship leadership.
  - b. Option 2:

Complete the Mission Training Center course on worship offered by Concordia, Bronxville, NY or its equivalent at another Synodical college.
  
3. To demonstrate "[a]n understanding of the nature of the public proclamation of the Word the candidate should
  - a. Recognize that the readings required for the previous competency also apply to the public proclamation of the Word of God. In addition to those readings, the candidate should read Acts 13:13-48, Romans 10:14-15 and *God's No and God's Yes*, by C.F.W. Walther.
  - b. Write a brief statement about the purpose of preaching, including a discussion of Law and Gospel in preaching.
  - c. Include a sample sermon written under the supervision of the proposed supervising pastor.
  
4. To demonstrate "[a]n understanding of the importance of teaching Christian faith and life" the candidate should

- a. Recognize that previous readings about worship and public proclamation also have significant relevance to teaching the faith. In addition, the candidate should read the Small Catechism of Martin Luther.
- b. Write a brief statement about the role of teaching in a ministry, including a discussion of the value and purpose of the Small Catechism.
- c. Include a lesson plan for a Bible Study that the candidate has prepared (preferably one he has used or will use under the proposed supervisor's tutelage).