

Partnership Covenant for Participation in the Specific Ministry Pastor Program

Participation in the Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) program requires a relationship of trust among those involved in this unique opportunity to prepare workers for Christian ministry and mission. A candidate for this program does not initiate the admission process himself, but rather is nominated and supported by those who represent and are responsible for the specific ministry/mission into which the candidate will be placed. This document articulates the covenant of trust and responsibility that exists among the seminary, the candidate, the sponsoring ministry/mission, and the district.

The seminary pledges its support to the student by

- Providing theological education through its program of studies.
- Providing orientation, support, and encouragement of the pastor-supervisor.
- Including SMP students in the corporate life of the seminary student body through prayer, encouragement, and student services.
- Working with local and district supervision, to provide evaluation leading to certification as a Specific Ministry Pastor.

The district of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, through its district president, promises

- To provide overall supervision of the progress of the candidate, including doctrinal supervision, and to endeavor to support the candidate in every way possible.
- That by advancing a candidate for the SMP program, to ensure that once he is ordained as a Specific Ministry Pastor, it will monitor his continued progress in the program, and should a student refuse to complete the study program for the SMP, will remove that student from the roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
- To ensure that once the Specific Ministry Pastor has completed his study program he will work in a situation which will provide supervision by an ordained pastor (non-SPM) of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
- To be responsible to ensure that tuitions and fees are remitted to the seminary in a timely manner.

The sponsoring entity (a calling agency of synod) agrees

- To pray for the candidate and support him, his family, and his ministry spiritually and emotionally as coworkers in God's Kingdom
- To develop and support a financial plan in which the costs of education and the support of the student are met in a realistic way.
- To utilize the Specific Ministry Pastor candidate and ordinand according to the agreed upon arrangements to conduct the specific ministry for which he is being prepared.
- To require that the participant in the program complete the study program as administered by the seminary and to encourage and support him in continuing education.

The pastor-supervisor agrees to fulfill all responsibilities outlined in the document “SMP Pastor-Supervisor: Position Description.”

