

Gifted for Ministry

Congregations of the ELCA are tasked with calling forth ministry leaders to be pastors and deacons. Congregations of the Central/Southern Illinois Synod hope that you will take an active interest in helping to call forth new ministers for the Church.

What Is Candidacy?

Becoming a rostered minister in the ELCA begins with a sense of call to serve Christ and his church as a pastor or deacon. Discovering this call and what it means is a process of discernment. It is done in conversation with one's pastor, synod leadership, and the wider community of the church. This ELCA process is called Candidacy.

Candidacy is a formalized, yet personally and relationally focused journey in discernment and formation as leader in the church. While the candidate discerns their own call to rostered ministry, the community of the Church is also discerning its relationship with and endorsement of the candidate through the Candidacy Committee.

Candidates for rostered ministry journey through a three-phase process of entrance, endorsement, and approval. These take place in conjunction with academic coursework, ministry formation experiences, Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), and internship.

If you know someone with gifts for ministry, tell that person know! If you yourself sense a call to be a pastor or deacon, begin a conversation with your pastor or spiritual mentor to continue your discernment. Then contact the Central/Southern Illinois Synod Assistant to the Bishop for Candidacy, Pastor Ken Sandlin, ken.sandlin@csis-elca.org to begin the candidacy process. Candidates should be entranced into ELCA candidacy before enrolling in seminary.

[CSIS-ELCA.org/Candidacy](https://www.csis-elca.org/Candidacy)

“It’s not only the job of our seminaries and universities to identify and raise up leaders in the church. This is something that belongs to all of us.”

—Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton

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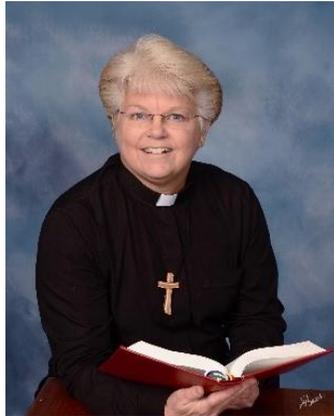
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Meet Laurie Hensley, a C/SIS Ministry Candidate

When God comes knocking at the door, it is best to answer. However, it took me years to finally answer the call into ministry. I was a professional businesswoman involved in real estate, yet something always felt missing. I kept questioning if this was what God wanting me to do with my life. The Holy Spirit kept giving me signs...and eventually it took a huge billboard to get my attention. Finally, I called the Central/Southern Illinois Synod and met with the candidacy office, Ken Sandlin. The process of Candidacy seemed daunting, but Ken assured me that he would be available to help me through the entire process. In fact, I would have a team to help support me through the candidacy process. Plus, Ken assured me that I "wasn't too old" to start down the path to ordained ministry.



I began both the Candidacy process and Wartburg Seminary in September 2019...at the age of 55. I am so thankful I took the first step and began the process. As part of my studies at Wartburg, I am serving the congregation of Bethany Lutheran Church in Woodhull on a part time basis while attending Wartburg as a full time MDiv student. The clerical collar fits...this is what God has been calling me to do with my life!

If you are sensing the call by the Holy Spirit, contact the Central/Southern Synod office and arrange a meeting.

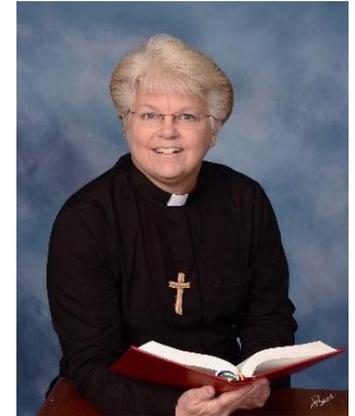


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