

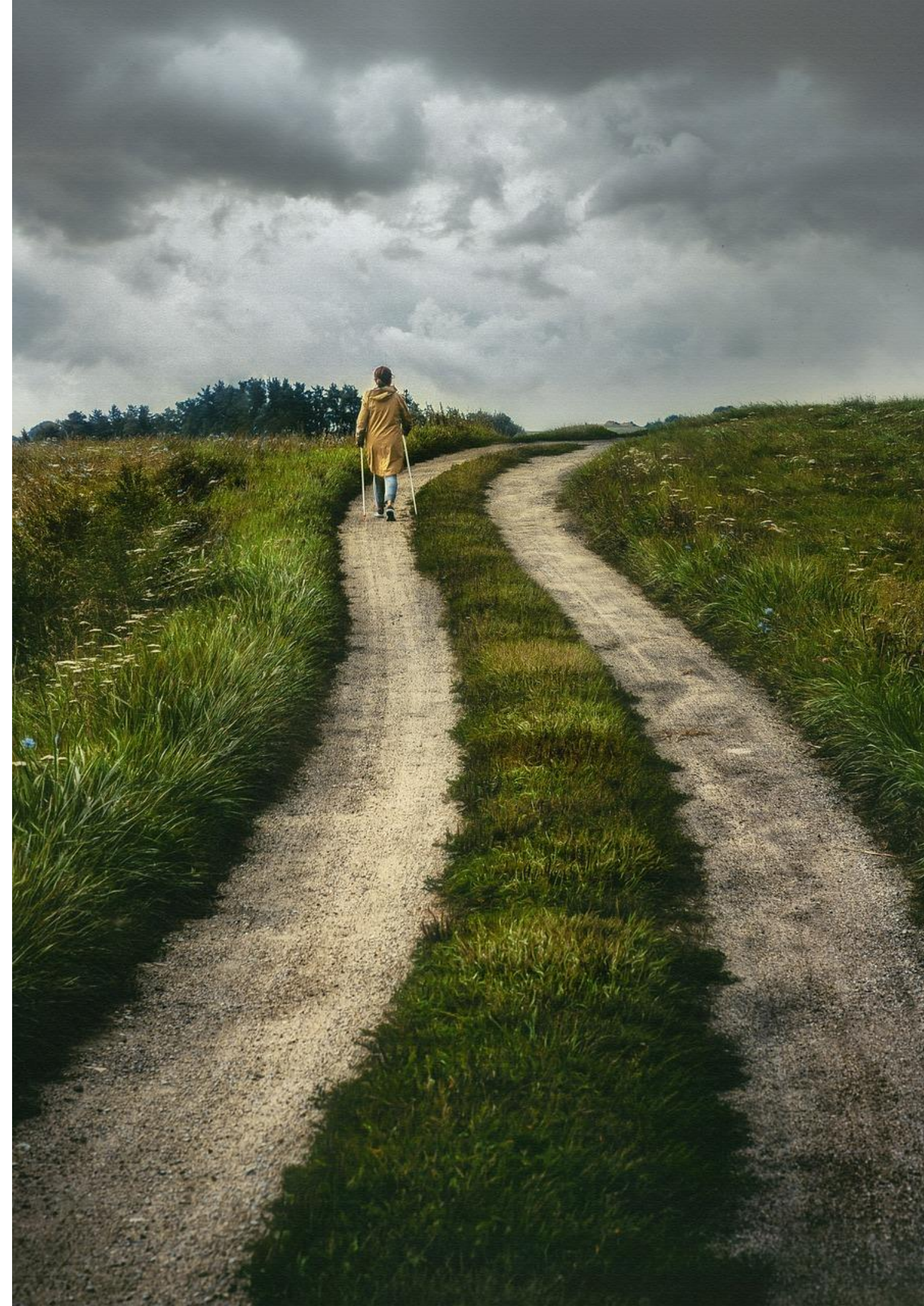


# Reimagining Candidacy Hearing

Candidacy and Leadership Working Group Initial Proposal  
January 2024

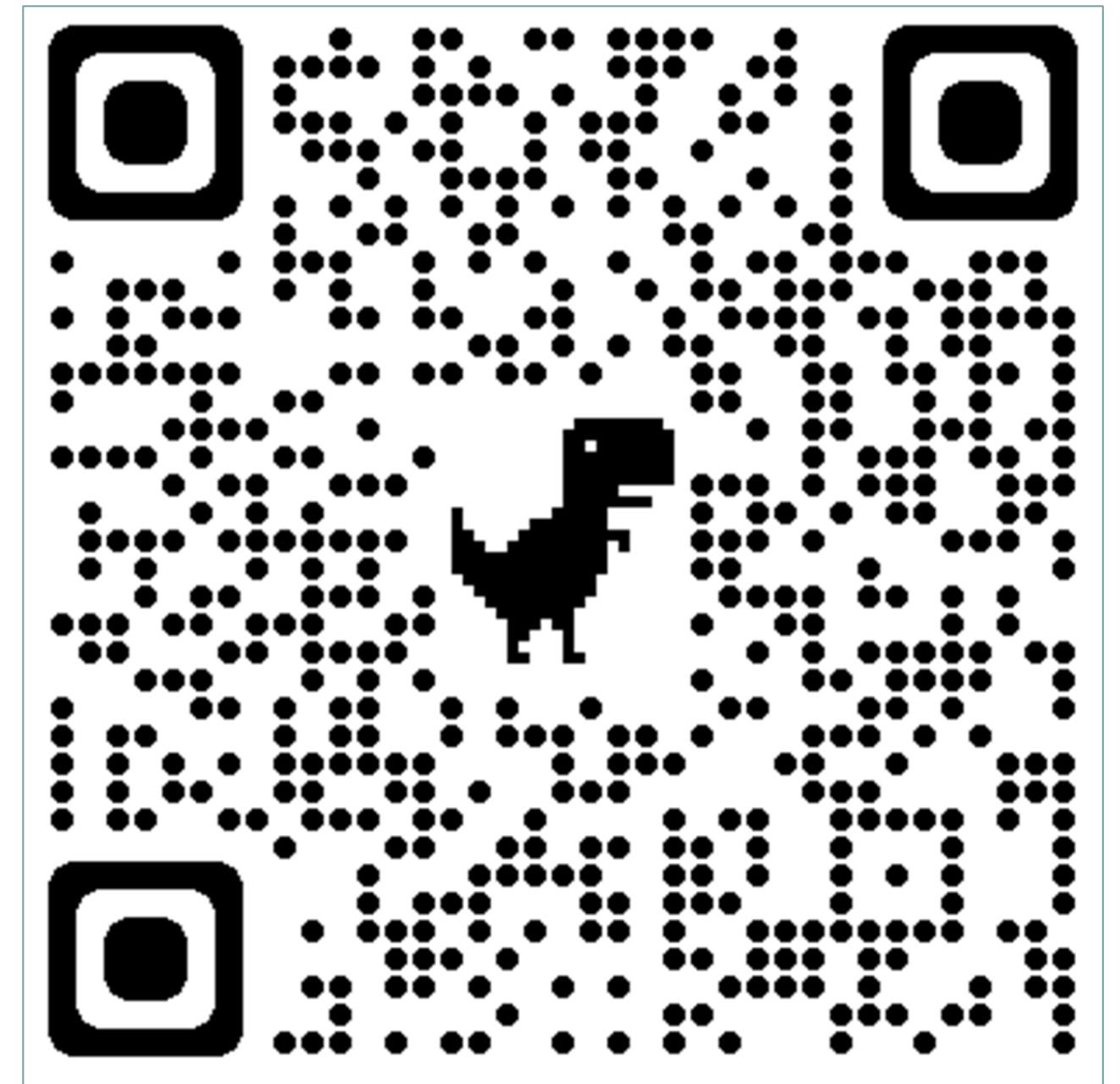
# Agenda

- How did we get here
- Why reimagine candidacy now
- What have we done so far
- What we have learned
- Design Criteria
- Proposed Process
  - Core Competencies
  - Formation
  - Process
  - Partnerships: roles & responsibilities
- Next Steps



# Questions to wonder about...

1. What resonates with you?
2. What do you need more information about?
3. What else do you want to share?



# How did we get here?

Anecdotes from around the church:

- Not enough Rostered Ministers
- Some rostered leaders lack a basic understanding of Lutheran theology
- The process is complicated
- Not enough discernment leading to issues down the road
- Not using research to understand the changing needs of the church and the candidates
- “-isms” entrenched: uneven preference for white, male, straight candidates





# **Candidacy Leadership Development Working Group**

Krista Anderson, Irma Banales, Jacqui Pagel,  
Phil Hirsch, Susan Candea, Tim Feiertag, Guy  
Erwin, Cherlyne Beck, Terri Elton, David Lenz,  
Sara Cutter

NOT PICTURED: Javier Goitia, Christopher  
deForest, David Anglada

# Candidacy Working Group

**Our vision** is to recommend a process for candidacy that forms and supports rostered ministers for the current and future church.

Updates: [elca.org/formation](http://elca.org/formation)

# What have we done so far?

## Candidacy Leadership Development Working Group (CLDWG)

- Launched in March 2022
- 12/13-member team, various stakeholders
  - Bishops, Church Council Members, CW Staff, Synod Staff, Layperson(s), Deacons, Pastors, former and current candidacy committee members
  - Latino, Black, Indigenous, White, geographically dispersed, LGBTQ, married, single, variety of ages, TEEM, MDiv



- Listening Sessions: more than 800 responses
- Survey to excluded communities: more than 300 responses
- Research with ecumenical partners
- Tried a few things that ended quickly
- Currently finalizing what Rostered Ministers need to Be, Know, and Do
- Developing prototypes for the candidacy process to match the needs of current and future church





# What We Have Learned: Challenges & Pain Points

- Changing needs of the world and ELCA ministries
- Process designed for a candidate that is no longer universal
- Current process is too complicated
- Inconsistency across the church
- Lack of objectivity
- Lack of clarity around roles
- Need for more discernment prior to formal candidacy process

# Why Reimagine Candidacy?

The candidacy process is the organized institutional form by which the ELCA serves its mission by preparing the people of God in a variety of forms of leadership to serve the Church and the world.

Its primary task is to identify, form, and equip the people of God for leading ministries of Word and Service and Word and Sacrament through ordination and increasingly for the authorizing of lay leaders by synods.

This formation process needs to attend to the needs of the church, both current and future, as well as the gifts and abilities of those called to serve, understanding that calls are both external and internal.

# Design Criteria

- Grounded in our call to bear witness to the Triune God.
- Agile and responsive to the changing needs of the church and our candidates.
- Accompany candidates through a clear, understandable, and flexible discernment and formation process.
- The desired outcomes and competencies of the candidacy process will be clearly articulated and transparent.
- The roles and responsibilities of each party involved in the candidacy process will be distinct and explicit
- Take seriously the importance of discernment before entering candidacy, as well as during candidacy





**The View From 10,000 Feet**

# Core Competencies

Theology/Bible

Theoretical

Cultural Context

Ministerial Leadership  
(roster specific)

Personal &  
Interpersonal

*Each category will hold a variety of competencies. Each competency will be defined by a rubric describing the successful formation of that competency.*

*\*Successful completion will be assessed differently for Rostered Ministers and Authorized Lay Ministers.*

# Theology and Bible

Critical  
engagement with  
the Biblical Story

Articulate the Gospel

Lutheran/Confessions  
connected to today's  
world

History of Christianity,  
including Reformation  
History

Understanding of  
Triune God across  
time and place

The Church's Call to  
the World/Missional  
Ecclesiology

Applied Ethics

# Theoretical

Systems Theory

Psychology &  
Sociology

Reading Contexts &  
Cultural Awareness

Adaptive Leadership  
& Leading in  
Complexity

Mediating and  
Leading in Conflict

# Cultural Context

Outward focused  
orientation

Cultural Humility  
and Intelligence  
(Theory)

Read Context (micro  
and macro) and  
Contextualize

Bias/Anti-racism

Engages  
Difference/Diversity



# Ministerial Leadership

Roster and area of specialization may impact these competency expectations

Preaching and  
Worship  
Leadership

Teaching and Faith  
Formation

Caring Ministry  
and Cultivating  
Christian  
Community

Evangelism

Community  
Engaging, Service,  
Justice

Stewardship and  
Financial  
Leadership

Non-profit  
Leadership and  
Administration

Discernment  
practices

# Personal & Interpersonal

Emotional  
Intelligence

Interpersonal  
Capacities

Cultural Humility  
(lived expression)

Healthy Boundaries

Self-Care and Self-  
Awareness around  
Wholeness Wheel

Personal  
Faith/Engaged in  
Faith Practices

# Competency Rubric Example Theology/Bible

## **Critical engagement with the Biblical Story - part 1 - comprehension and analysis**

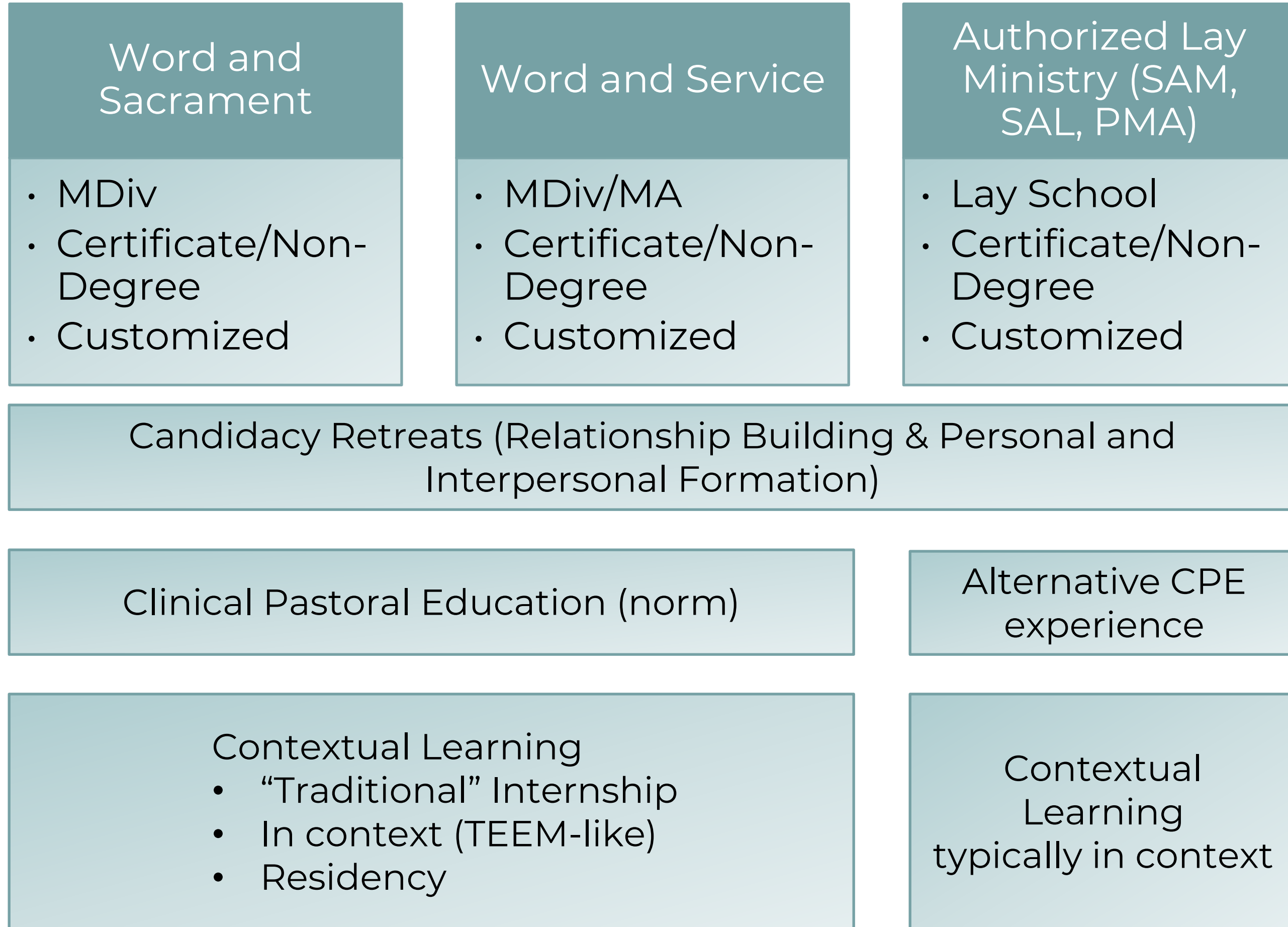
- a. Understands what a text says and can summarize the text. Identifies basic features of a text in response to assigned prompts.
- b. Demonstrates the ability to read texts with purpose, choosing appropriate reading strategies depending on features of the text or genre.
- c. Integrates the text with general contextual knowledge (history, culture, author, etc.) to draw more complex conclusions about a text's message.
- d. Synthesizes textual and contextual aspects of the text with critical perspectives (secondary sources and critical tools) to go beyond a text's explicit message and recognize broader issues.

## **Critical engagement with the Biblical Story - part 2 - interpretation and imagination**

- a. Uses critical tools and secondary sources as assigned; identifies basic aspects of a text in response to instructor prompts. Approaches text with the intention of proving the right answer.
- b. Demonstrates the ability to read texts with purpose, choosing appropriate reading strategies depending on features of the text or genre. Engages the text in ways that inform how the contemporary world is viewed and understood.
- c. Uses critical tools and secondary sources independently, with an awareness of a text's surplus of meanings. Is able to explore new questions, encounter diverse perspectives, and enhance discussions with others.
- d. Uses a variety critical tools in order to read the Scriptures in all of their complexity and promise. Understands the ways the Scriptures have been interpreted over the centuries and in various contexts. Discovers new readings from diverse communities that enrich imagination and help people reimagine life and faith in light of God's word.

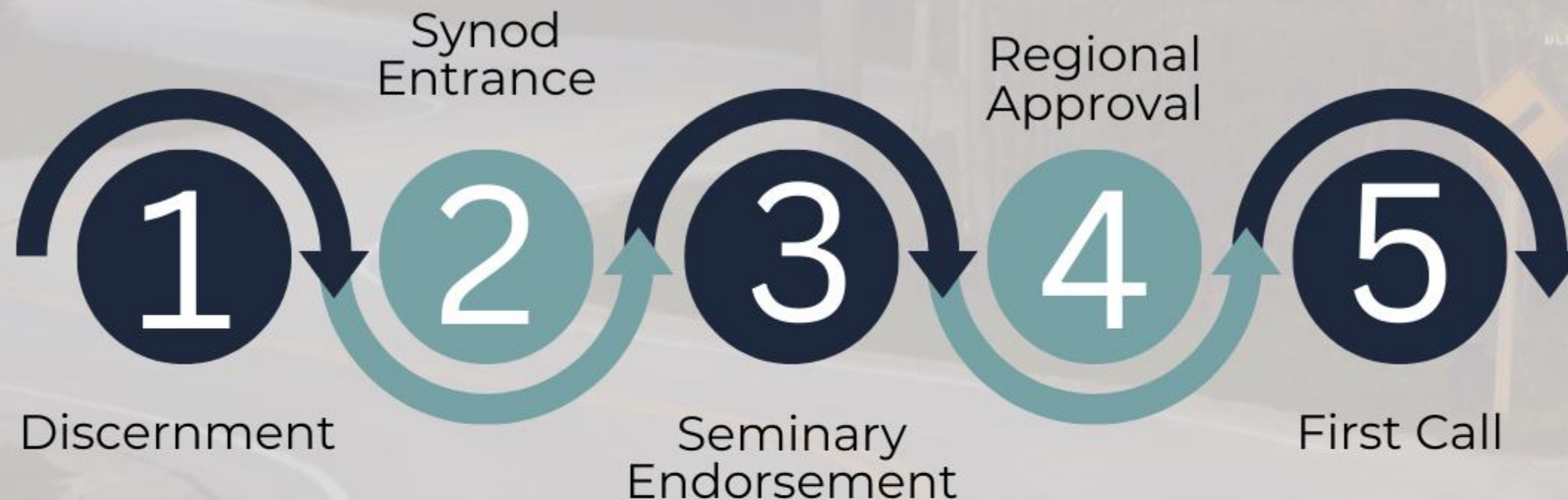
# Formation Components

Discernment

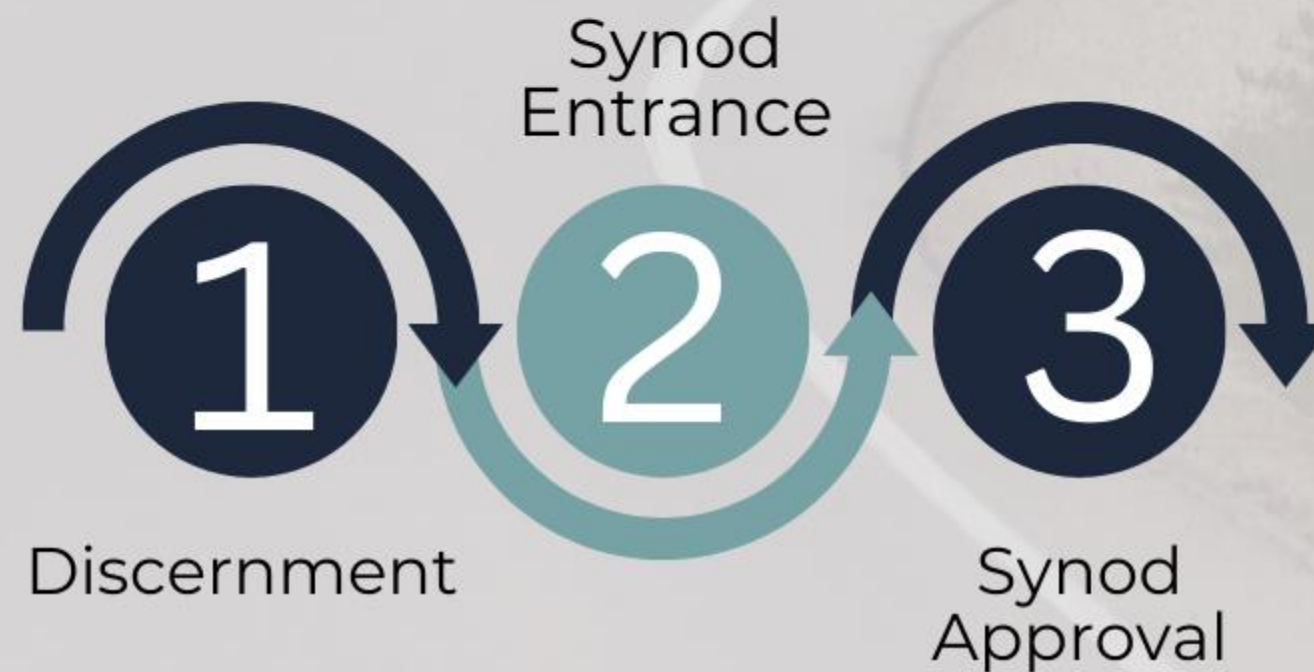


# Candidacy Process

**Rostered  
Ministers**



**Certified Lay  
Ministers**



# Discernment

Discernment

Synod  
Entrance

Seminary  
Endorsement

Regional  
Approval

First Call

Discernment is a standard process prior to candidacy.

- Recognize spiritual gifts
- Opportunities to serve
- Core Competencies are shared
- Discernment Essay – begins the Candidacy Portfolio



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# Synod Entrance

Discernment

Synod  
Entrance

Seminary  
Endorsement

Regional  
Approval

First Call

- Applicant may make recommendations for an Accompanier (chosen and assigned by the synod)
- Application materials are submitted (psych assessment, background check, etc.)
- Competency Assessment
- Meet with Synod Entrance Committee
- Formation Plan is created

# Seminary Endorsement

Discernment

Synod  
Entrance

Seminary  
Endorsement

Regional  
Approval

First Call

- Check in with Synod to determine readiness for Endorsement (based on competencies)
- Competency Assessment
- Meet Seminary Endorsement Panel
- Review/Update Formation Plan



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# Regional Approval

Discernment

Synod  
Entrance

Seminary  
Endorsement

Regional  
Approval

First Call

- Check in with Synod to determine readiness for approval (based on competencies)
- Apply for approval (Rostered Ministers Profile is the approval application) Submit final portfolio
- Submit final portfolio
- Meet with the Regional Approval Committee

# First Call

Discernment

Synod  
Entrance

Seminary  
Endorsement

Regional  
Approval

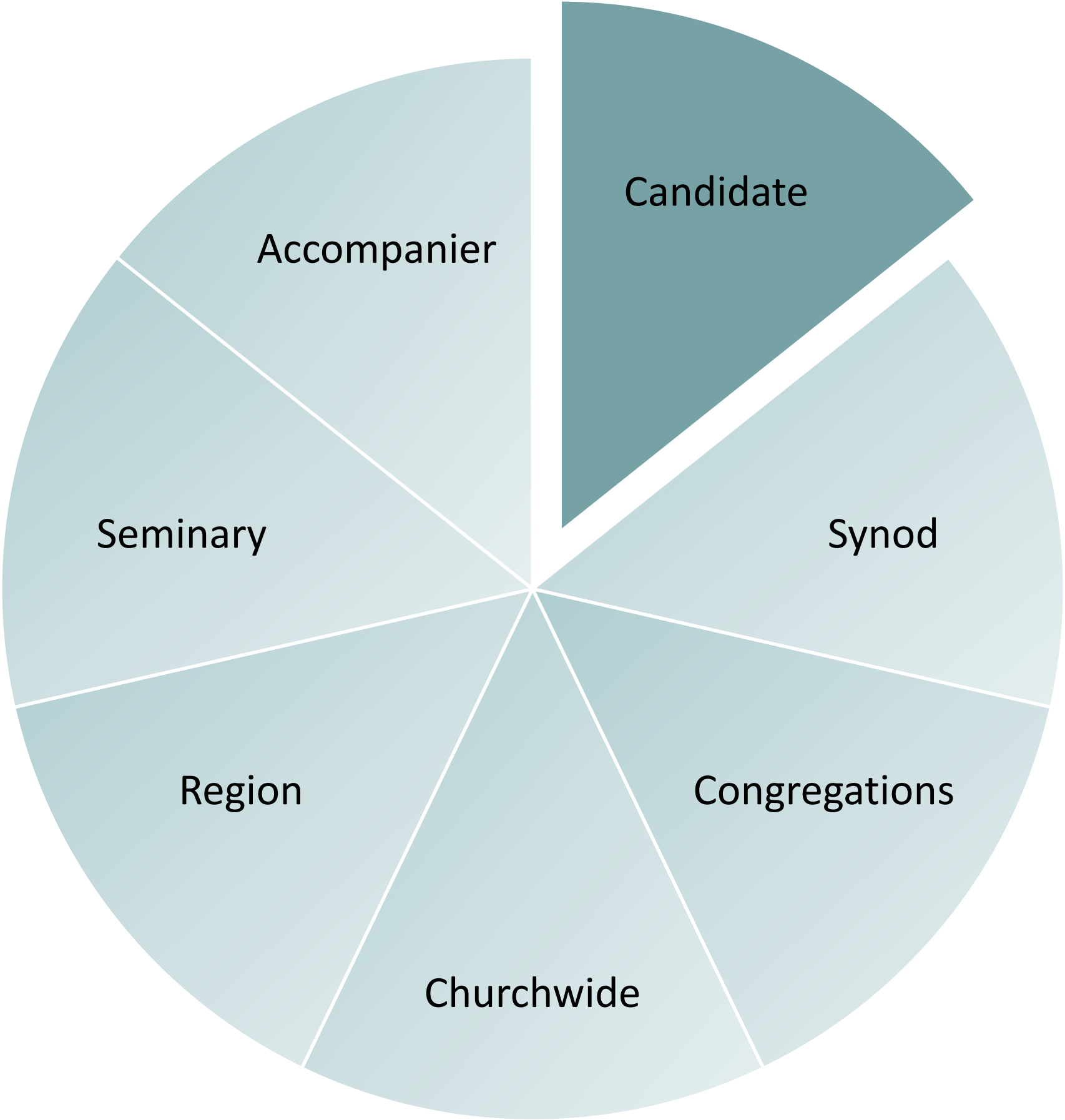
First Call

- Candidates are available for First Call
- Expectation of ongoing formation after ordination
- Synod remains responsible through first call



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# Candidacy Partners



# Synod Candidacy Team

- Bishop
- Assistant to the Bishop (if applicable)
- Entrance Committee Members (3-5)
- Regional Approval Representatives (2)
- Accompaniers (come and go with specific candidates)

Provides leadership for discernment opportunities/events

Supports and attends annual candidacy retreat

Accompanier:  
Attends interviews, candidate retreats, and checks in quarterly (not an assessor)

Entrance Committee:  
Interviews candidate (readiness to begin) and creates competency plan with the candidate and synod staff.

Regional Approval Representatives:  
Participate in regional approval interviews

# Synod Bishop and/or A2B

Meet with folks discerning prior to their applying

Work with region candidacy teams to facilitate discernment opportunities/events

Match applicants with Accompanier

Participate in Entrance Interview and oversee initial competency assessment

Works with candidacy team to plan annual candidacy retreat

Tracks all application and portfolio materials

Supports seminaries with contextual learning placement

Affirms candidate's readiness for approval

Attends and participates in the Regional Approval Interviews

Activates RMP after First Call Conversation



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# Region

(Candidacy and Leadership Managers)

Support regional discernment opportunities & events

New Candidate Orientation

Provide training for and support Entrance Committee Members

Provide training for Accompaniers

Provide training for and support Bishops and A2B

Participates in Entrance Interviews and Competency Plan conversations as needed

Support annual candidacy retreats

Train the regional approval committee

Facilitate the Regional Approval Process (participate in interviews as needed)



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# Seminaries

Support discernment opportunities & programs (share about seminary programs, competencies, etc.)

Receives application from the candidate for a program of study

Provide coursework, contextual education placement

Responsible for Seminary Endorsement (Competency Assessment) and communicating w/synod

Submit conferred degree to synod



# Churchwide

Develop discernment resources/programs, provide training for those shepherding the discernment programs, offer national opportunities

Creates and maintains a uniform application process

Receives and acts on requests for synod transfer

Develop standardized seminary endorsement options

Develop training for the regional approval process



# Candidacy Reimagined: Accompaniment, Accountability and Assessment of Applicants and Candidates

	SYNOD	SEMINARY	REGION	CHURCHWIDE
Accompany	<p><b>Discernment</b> Throughout process (synod staff &amp; committee)</p> <p><b>Assigned mentor/accompanier/coach</b></p>	<p>Discernment</p> <p>Throughout the process (advisor)</p>	<p><b>Discernment</b> <b>Candidacy Onboarding</b> <b>First Call Overview</b></p>	<p><b>Discernment</b> <b>Process Concerns</b></p>
Formation Accountability*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discernment</b></li> <li>• <b>Personal &amp; Interpersonal Competencies</b></li> <li>• Contextual Placement</li> <li>• Theoretical Competencies</li> </ul>	<p>Discernment Contextual Placement/Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Theology/Bible Competencies</b></li> <li>• <b>Theoretical Competencies</b></li> <li>• <b>Cultural Context Competencies</b></li> <li>• <b>Ministerial Leadership</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discernment</b></li> <li>• <b>Personal &amp; Interpersonal Competencies</b></li> <li>• Theoretical Competencies</li> <li>• Cultural Context Competencies</li> </ul>	<p><b>Discernment</b></p> <p>Support Synodical and Regional Formation</p>
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Readiness to begin (Entrance)</b></li> <li>• <b>Initial Competency Assessment</b></li> <li>• <b>Authority to end candidacy - definitions and guidelines</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Theological/Bible Competencies</b> <b>Theoretical Competencies</b> <b>Cultural Context Competencies</b></p>	<p><b>Assess readiness for ordination: Integration of Ministerial Leadership Competencies</b></p> <p><b>Personal &amp; Interpersonal Competencies</b></p>	<p>Support with Initial Assessment</p> <p>Represented in Regional Assessment Process (via CaLM)</p>

BOLD indicates who has the primary role and responsibility

# Candidacy and Leadership Development Working Group

## Working Timeline to enhance our ability to share the gospel.



### **November 2023 – January 2024**

Share the draft of the “process” which will include our consensus about the purpose of Candidacy Process, Importance of Discernment, Core Competencies, Paths for Ministry, Responsibilities for Accountability and Accompaniment with stakeholders for feedback.

### **March 27, 2024 - Conference of Bishops Meeting for review**

2nd draft of “process” based on feedback on above, ready to submit to Church council

### **Spring 2024 – Church Council**

Share 2nd draft of “process” as well as possible constitutional changes

### **Fall 2024 – Conference of Bishops Meeting**

Draft of candidacy manual for their review

### **Fall 2024 – Church Council meeting**

Draft of candidacy manual for their review

Suggested constitutional changes to be recommended to churchwide assembly

### **Spring 2025 – Conference of Bishops Meeting**

Final draft of candidacy manual

### **Spring 2025 – Church Council**

Final draft of candidacy manual (approval based upon adoption of constitutional amendments)

### **August 2025 – Churchwide Assembly**

Approval of any needed constitutional amendments

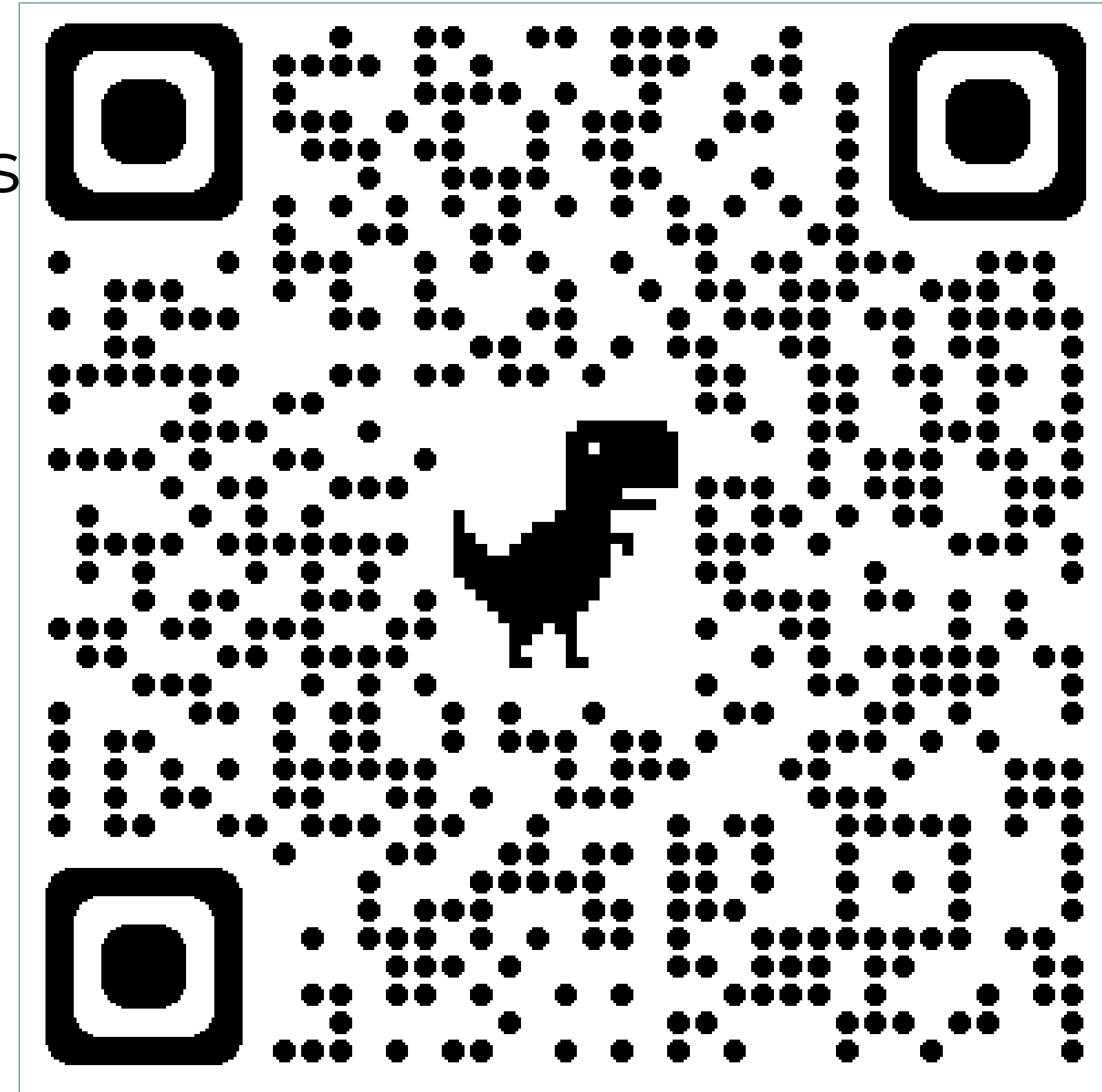
# Curious Questions

- Much more work to do in the details
- Opportunity to respond in a google form (QR Code)

<https://forms.gle/6b3VBZx9oB1lyTp99>



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*General CLDWG Feedback form*