



Dear rostered minister,

In September of 2016, Secretary Chris Boerger sent an email to all rostered ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America informing them of the changes that were adopted by the 2016 Churchwide Assembly. Beginning Jan. 1, 2017, there would be two rosters described by their primary function: Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Ministers of Word and Service. The ministers of word and sacrament would continue to be called pastors. The ministers of word and service (formerly known as associates in ministry, deaconesses and diaconal ministers) could be called deacons.

In December of 2016, Secretary Boerger sent an email informing rostered ministers that the Candidacy Portal and Mobility Database System would be shut down from Dec. 15 through Jan. 17 so that forms and titles could be updated. This has now taken place as well as changes to some of the documents on the ELCA website. A new Candidacy Manual has also been [posted](#). Since there are many documents on the website, changes will continue to be made over the next few months.

The work of the Word and Service Task Force has been completed. However, the work of the Entrance Rite Discernment Group continues as the group provides resources to be used across the church around the discussion of the entrance rite for the new Roster of Ministers of Word and Service.

Four resources are now available.

- [Frequently Asked Questions #1 \(FAQ\)](#) from the Entrance Rite Discernment Group
- An [adapted Consecration Rite](#) to be used until the vote at the 2019 Churchwide Assembly
- A [liturgy of welcome](#)
- A Bible study, "[Ministry, Mission and Leadership](#)"

Coming soon – an insert answering the question: What is a deacon?

The goal of the Entrance Rite Discernment Group is to have a draft decision ready for the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council in September 2018 so that the final decision can be forwarded to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly.

This summer there are two special opportunities for deacons to become acquainted with deacons from a previous lay roster other than their own and to see diakonia from a world view.

The 2017 Assembly of [DIAKONIA World Federation](#) will be held in Chicago, June 28-July 5. (On June 30, there will be an opportunity for ministers of word and service to gather separately.)

- The first churchwide [ELCA Rostered Ministers Gathering](#) will be held in Atlanta, Aug. 7-10. (There will be a specific affinity group for ministers of word and service.)

Various regions and groups are in the beginning stages of planning gatherings of ministers of word and service. Watch for notices in your area. If a gathering is not yet being considered, ask your synod and region how you can help bring one about.

A method to encourage connections between ministers of word and service is being discussed.

As we continue with the practical implementations of the 2016 churchwide decision to move to two rosters, may the partnership of these two rosters open many opportunities for the creative and enriched evangelical outreach and mission that is so needed in the world today.

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions for members of the Entrance Rite Discernment Group or for those implementing the practical pieces of this change, please send them to Cherlyne.Beck@elca.org.

Entrance Rite Discernment Group members

Bishop (Emeritus) Robert Driesen and Bishop Mark Narum, co-chairs

Sister Elizabeth Colver

Bishop James Dunlop

Cynthia Gustavson (Church Council representative)

The Rev. Dr. Kathryn Kleinhans

Deacon Dr. Lake Lambert

Dr. John Litke

Dr. Susan McArver

The Rev. Dr. Jose Rodriguez

Deacon Louise Williams

ELCA churchwide staff

The Rev. Cherlyne V. Beck, program director, support of rostered ministers

The Rev. Wm. Chris Boerger, secretary

The Rev. Kevin L. Strickland, assistant to the presiding bishop/executive for Worship

The Rev. Gregory Villalon, director, ELCA Leadership for Mission/Candidacy

In Christ's name,

The Rev. Cherlyne V. Beck

Program Director, Support of Rostered Ministers

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

This email was sent to ELCA rostered leaders. To update your email address, please contact constituent.care@elca.org.
Please forward this email to others who may be interested.

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