

## Southern Ohio Candidacy Report

What is Candidacy? In the ELCA simply entering seminary does not put one on the road to rostered ministry. The reason for this is based in our theological understanding of call. A call comes from the church. Even though, a person might have an inner sense of call that leads them toward ministry, it must be confirmed by the church. Therefore we have a group of people, called a Candidacy committee, who represent the church, gathered to accompany a candidate through these stages while at the same time the candidate works to complete seminary. There are three main steps in Candidacy: Entrance, Endorsement and Approval.

The Southern Ohio Candidacy committee no longer is a part of the Ohio Multi-Synodical Candidacy committee. Why? Simply speaking, to provide better care for our candidates. The reason is basically logistical. For example, previously we would hold a panel with a candidate at one of the various stages of the process and come to a recommendation. The recommendation would be shared with the candidate. However, we would need to wait for the next joint Ohio Committee to meet in order to vote on the recommendation and make it official. Since the Ohio Committee met only 3 times a year, sometimes this would mean candidates were waiting several months for official word from the Ohio committee. As a Southern Ohio Candidacy committee, we can now have a panel make a recommendation and then vote a conclusion. It is more immediate. As a Southern Ohio only committee, we were able to increase the number of people on the committee from 6 to 8. This provides more relators for our candidates. Now we can also meet monthly in order to meet candidates where they are in the process. In general as a stand-alone Southern Ohio Committee we can provide better pastoral care and more immediate conclusions to panels for our candidates.

Currently in the Southern Ohio, we have 33 candidates and applicants at some point in the process. We have 17 Word and Sacrament candidates, 3 TEEM candidates and 1 Word and Service candidate. We have 12 candidates awaiting an entrance decision (10 of which indicate pursuing Word and Sacrament rostering). We are excited to announce that we have 3 candidates graduating this spring!

In Christ,

Rev. Stephen K. Kimm  
Chair, Southern Ohio Candidacy Committee