

## **Introduction to the Multiple Staff Workshop**

Team ministry in the church is here to stay! More than 35% of the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are served by more than one pastor and this figure doesn't include the many more congregations which have an Associate in Ministry, a Diaconal Minister or a Deaconess on the staff of the congregation. This means that between one third and one half of the membership of the ELCA belongs to a congregation where there is a multiple staff serving together in ministry.

As church professionals come together to do ministry, it is essential that they intentionally plan their personal and professional relationship. The Multiple Staff Workshop provides the setting and the components to do just that. There is also the opportunity to integrate these new learnings with specific applications to your parish or ministry situation. In the course of the Multiple Staff Workshop you will receive information specifically applicable to team ministry and have the opportunity to share with your partner(s) your own interests and desires for personal and professional growth. You will learn about your own leadership style and that of others on your staff and explore implications for your team. With the material generated in the workshop you will then develop with your team a covenant which will detail the specifics of how you will work together. Finally, you will have time to discuss closing the gaps in ministry in your setting and to work on a plan to reach those goals. These are some of the activities included in the Multiple Staff Workshop.

Since the beginning of the ELCA in 1988, hundreds of rostered and non-rostered leaders as well as synod staff from across the country have attended. In some synods this workshop is required of persons beginning team ministry and various modules of the workshop have been offered to seminary students. Experience has shown that while staff teams which have been together for several years benefit from the workshop, newly formed teams find it of particular usefulness as they initiate their relationship. In fact some teams have returned more than four times as their personnel has changed. The tenure of team members who have participated has ranged from 14 years to some who have come prior to making their decision to become part of a multiple staff. A very common team size is two persons, however, some staffs of up to nine have attended – full and part time, lay and clergy, rostered and non-rostered, in parish and non-parish settings. No matter how the team is structured, the size of the staff or the congregational setting, this workshop will enhance your ministry effectiveness.

There is no “one way” to do team ministry. The best way is what works for you and the staff of the workshop will help you identify and implement it. It is important for those who are participants in the workshop that all the significant members of the team are present and that they participate in all the modules.