



**Church Worker Recruitment Initiative**







## **Church Worker Recruitment Initiative**

**[www.lutheranchurch.ca/RSVP02/](http://www.lutheranchurch.ca/RSVP02/)**

### **Prayer for Church Workers**

Oh God  
who has chosen us  
to make disciples of all nations and  
who by Baptism  
has called us to build up your church,  
we earnestly implore you to choose  
from among us, your children,  
many pastors and church workers  
who will love you with their whole heart  
and will gladly spend their entire lives  
making you known and loved by all.  
In Christ's name we pray.  
Amen

## Foundations for Service Preparing Strong Servants

**FOCUS STATEMENT:** *God prepares future pastors and deacons for action in professional church work through a process that begins in the home, continues in the local congregation and culminates in centres of higher education at the church's university or seminaries.*

On Sunday, January 20, Lutheran Church–Canada will continue its three-year Synod-wide recruitment effort to identify and encourage our future church workers. The focus statement stresses that the call into church work is normally a process. It begins in the home, continues in the local congregation, and culminates in our institutions of higher education where students are theologically and spiritually equipped for service in the Church. The three-year recruitment plan follows from this statement:

January, 2000 The Christian Home Grows Young Servants

January, 2001 The Christian Congregation Nurtures Growing Servants

### **January, 2002 The Church's Schools Prepare Strong Servants**

This year's emphasis is on the important role Lutheran Church–Canada's institutions of higher education play in preparing strong servants for the Church. Concordia University College of Alberta, Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary (St. Catharines) and Concordia Lutheran Seminary (Edmonton) prepare strong servants to serve as pastors and deacons in LCC.

We are pleased to send to you materials for RSVP02. Over the last four years, 318 people have been identified from 83 congregations. We are grateful for all who submitted names and for those congregations who participated in the initiative even though no names were nominated. This year's resources include an Order of Service.

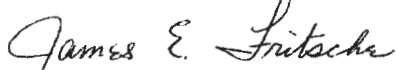
We ask that interviews be made during February and that names be sent to President Mayan at the end of the month. **Please send in all names nominated, even if they were nominated in previous years.** Receiving a nomination two or three years in a row can be a tremendous encouragement for a prospective church worker.

We advise that when children or youth are nominated, parents know of their nomination and be present during the interview. The initiative should be fully explained so that parents are fully informed.

Recruitment initiative materials from previous years are available from the LCC national office or from the LCC Home Page: [www.lutheranchurch.ca/RSVP](http://www.lutheranchurch.ca/RSVP)

Thank you in advance for participating in this very important project. The harvest is great, but the labourers are few. Let us pray and work together to identify, recruit and nurture those labourers whom the Lord has chosen to work in His kingdom.

Yours in service to Christ,



Rev. James Fritsche, project coordinator

# ***Prepare for Action***

## **RSVP02**

### **Schedule**

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<b>Sunday, January 13</b>	
• read letter from President Mayan to your congregation	6
• distribute bulletin insert: <i>Listening to God's call through His people</i>	7
• include RSVP bulletin announcement	8
• make a verbal announcement regarding the initiative	
<b>Sunday, January 20</b>	
• include RSVP bulletin announcement	8
• distribute bulletin insert: <i>Church work Vocations</i>	9
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• use the worship service	11
• preach sermon	18
• conduct prepared adult Bible study	24
• conduct prepared youth Bible study	26
• collect nomination forms with offering	
<b>February</b>	
• interview nominees	35
• complete interview form	37
<b>March</b>	
• send completed interview forms to Synod office in Winnipeg	

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace and peace to you from Him who is the Light of the world!

Congregations throughout Lutheran Church—Canada will be setting aside next Sunday, the Second Sunday in Epiphany, to celebrate Synod’s Recruitment Initiative Sunday. The season of Epiphany is a good time for such a celebration. Epiphany is about light—the Light of the world. And it’s about bringing that Light, the Light of God’s grace and love in Jesus Christ to people who still live in darkness. But

*“How will they hear without someone preaching to them?”*

Through these words, St. Paul reminds us that Epiphany, by extension, is also about those who share the message. It’s about pastors and deacons and other church workers, about all those whom God calls to servant ministry in the Kingdom. It’s also about identifying those gifts of God and preparing them for service in the Church.

This coming Sunday you will have the opportunity to participate in this Epiphany task. We will ask you to consider whether there are any in your church family whom you believe God may be calling to serve as a pastor or church worker. We want you to share the names of these individuals with your pastor. After discussing the opportunities of ministry with them, he will, with their permission, pass their names on to me so that together as congregation, pastor and Synod we can nurture and God willing, prepare these individuals for service.

Please join me in praying that God will bless next week’s special Recruitment Sunday. May He give us the eyes to see His future gifts in our midst. And may He continue to use all of us no matter what our calling so that the Epiphany message of His grace and love is shared with the world.

In Christ,



Rev. Ralph E. Mayan, president  
Lutheran Church—Canada

## RSVP02 January 13 Bulletin insert

# Listening to God's call through His people.

**Hannah** dedicated her child **Samuel** to the Lord and he became a great prophet of God. (I Sam. 1:22b)

**Philip's** four **daughters** were among those who spread the Good News of Jesus. (Acts 21:9)

An **uncle** recently encouraged his **nephew** to become a pastor and he is now studying for the ministry.

A **grandmother** spoke to her **grandchildren** and prayed faithfully for them to serve the Lord and one became a teacher and later, a missionary in His service.

What **son, daughter, grandchild, niece, nephew** or **member** of your congregation can **you** encourage to prayerfully consider studying to become a full-time servant of the Lord as pastor, deacon, or missionary?

There may be young people in your family or in your congregation who:

- display a love of the Lord
- show love toward people
- desire to serve their church
- help in Sunday school or VBS
- are active in the youth/young adult group
- are intelligent and fun-loving

Speak to them, encourage them to consider that God's will for their lives may be full-time service in His kingdom.



**Prepare for Action–RSVP02** is a recruitment initiative of Lutheran Church–Canada which asks members of congregations to identify men and women whom they believe have the gifts and talents for church work vocations.



# Bulletin announcement

## January 13

### **Cheer for the home team!**

Isn't it great to receive encouragement, to know that someone is interested in what you are doing? Joining you in worship today are young men and women whom God may be calling to full-time service in Lutheran Church–Canada. You probably see them most Sundays, but have you thought that your word of encouragement may start them thinking about how they can serve God? Your next pastor, church worker or lay leader may be a member of your congregation. He or she may need to hear a word of encouragement from you!

The need for workers throughout LCC is great. Currently, there are 40 parishes without pastors. Many parishes are looking for additional church workers to help in youth, young adult and seniors ministries and to assist in visitation. God calls workers from among His own people, including the members of YOUR PARISH NAME HERE. Ask God who you can encourage to consider serving Him in full-time church work and be prepared to share that name next Sunday.

## January 20

### **Listen to the Spirit.**

Today we are asking members of YOUR PARISH NAME HERE to bring forward the names of young men and women whom you feel God may be calling to full-time church work. The nomination form in today's bulletin outlines the qualities you look for in a potential church worker. Following the sermon you will be given the opportunity to fill in the form and then place it in the offering plate.

Since our Synod's recruitment initiative began in 1998, more than 318 future church workers have been identified in 83 congregations including NAMES SUBMITTED FROM YOUR PARISH from this congregation. Each person was interviewed and he or she receives encouragement from the pastor and LCC's university and seminaries.

God calls workers from among His people. As a young man, our pastor was nurtured and encouraged in his home congregation. Today is your opportunity to ensure that when parishes need pastors or church workers, there is someone ready to accept the call. Ask God who you can encourage to consider serving Him in full-time church work. Fill in the nomination form, place it in the offering plate, and remember those people in your prayers as they consider God's plan for their lives.

## **LUTHERAN CHURCH—CANADA**

### **Church Work Vocations**

#### **Pastor**

A candidate for the pastoral ministry begins his journey as an active member of a Lutheran Church—Canada congregation or a partner church, showing evidence of his commitment to Christian ministry, being of good character, enjoying satisfactory health, and demonstrating pastoral suitability.

Upon completion of a three- or four-year undergraduate degree in any discipline, students apply to a seminary for their pastoral education. The four-year seminary program for Lutheran Church—Canada is offered at Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, and Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines.

Students wishing to enrol in a seminary find it helpful to take a broad liberal arts program at the university/college level. Courses to include are English, speech, humanities, philosophy, social sciences, natural sciences, and psychology. Introductory courses in Greek and Hebrew prior to seminary are also needed.

Prepared pastors—servants called and sent by the Holy Spirit—witness to salvation by grace through faith in Christ Jesus and serve in God’s world.



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#### **Deacons**

##### **Director of Parish Services**

Serving in a team ministry with the pastor, staff, and members of a congregation, a director of parish services offers skills in evangelism and outreach, parish education, hospital and elderly visitation, and youth/young adult ministry.

To become a director of parish services, a student enrolls in the Director of Parish Services program at Concordia University College of Alberta, Edmonton. He or she completes a Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in Religious Studies and a minor in Parish Services, together with certified practical experiences and a year of internship.

##### **Teacher**

Elementary and secondary school teachers are prepared for service in Lutheran Church—Canada through the Bachelor of Education (After Degree) program at Concordia University College or the Lutheran Teacher Colloquy program. Teachers are equipped to work in Lutheran schools where the primary goal is educating and nurturing children within the context of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

##### **Parish Nurse**

Registered nurses can take a Parish Nursing course through Concordia University College to teach them how to minister to the health and spiritual needs of members of a congregation. The parish nurse works with the pastor as part of a team ministry.

# Prepare for Action–RSVP02

## Qualities to look for

To give some idea of the kind of person who might respond well to Christ's call as a professional church worker, please keep these qualities in mind:

### 1. Intelligence and health

The Church looks for people of average to excellent intelligence and good health. One who can appreciate and communicate the Gospel of Christ. One who possesses the energy and ability to continue the mission of Jesus.

### 2. Integrity

The Church looks for people of strong character and virtue. One who demonstrates honesty in relationships and in work. One who possesses sound moral values.

### 3. Service

The Church looks for people who are interested in, or are already involved in service to others. One who shows an interest in people and cares about the welfare of others, especially those in need. One who can relate well to others.

### 4. Love of Christ and the Church

The Church looks for people who are willing to express their love through prayer and service. One who demonstrates an interest in the Church and relies on God in his/her own personal life.

*After prayerful consideration, I believe that this person has the qualities needed by a future church worker. Perhaps Jesus is calling him/her to this particular path of discipleship.*

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Please supply additional information if it is known.*

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **AGE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**YOUR NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please place the completed form in the offering plate.**



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# Worship Service

January 20, 2002

## Words of Welcome / Introduction of the Theme of the Day

### Theme Verses: Matthew 9:35-38

“Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When He saw the crowds, He had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field.’”

### Opening Hymn: “Hark The Voice of Jesus Calling”

(LW # 318; TLH # 496; LBW # 381)

## Invocation / Confession and Absolution

P: In the name of God the Father, who is the Lord of the harvest of souls, and in the name of God the Son, ✠ who is the Saviour for the harvest of souls, and in the name of God the Holy Spirit, who makes hearts ripe for the harvest of souls.

C: Amen.

P: We remember that we are sinners in need of God’s forgiveness. Let us then confess our sins to God, that we may be assured of His love and mercy.

C: Lord God, Heavenly Father, we who are Your baptized people, we who have heard Your Gospel call and who have been brought to faith by the work of the Holy Spirit, come to You seeking forgiveness for the wrongs we have done and for the good that we have left undone. For our slowness in following in Your footsteps, forgive us, O Lord. For our tardiness and our unfaithfulness in the use of the gifts You have given us, forgive us, O Lord. For our failure to witness to Your name, forgive us, O Lord. For our hesitancy to be workers in the harvest field of souls, forgive us, O Lord.

P: In mercy God has redeemed us. By grace God blesses us. In joy God inspires us. In power God gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. In love God forgives us. As a called and ordained servant of the Word I declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son ✠ and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## **The Introit of the Day**

may be chanted or spoken (OR an alternate hymn / song may be sung)

P: I do not hide Your righteousness in my heart; I speak of Your faithfulness and salvation. To do Your will, O my God, is my desire.

**C: I waited patiently for the Lord; He turned to me and heard my cry.**

P: He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; He set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.

**C: He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God.**

P: Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord.

**C: Blessed is the man who makes the Lord his trust.**

P: Many, O Lord my God, are the wonders You have done.

**C: I do not conceal Your love and Your truth from the great assembly.**

P: Do not withhold Your mercy from me, O Lord; may Your love and Your truth always protect me.

**C: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

P: I do not hide Your righteousness in my heart; I speak of Your faithfulness and salvation. To do Your will, O my God, is my desire.

## **The Collect of the Day**

P: Lord of the Living Harvest, who sends workers into the harvest field, forgive our indifference to speak of Your love and to support the spread of the Gospel as we ought. We pray that You would make each of us to realize that we, too, have been called according to Your will to speak Your reconciling Word to all people, and we trust that You will bless the proclamation of that Word for the growth of Your kingdom; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

## **The Sharing of God's Peace**

### **Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 49:1-6**

Listen to me, you islands; hear this, you distant nations: Before I was born the LORD called me; from my birth he has made mention of my name.

<sup>2</sup>He made my mouth like a sharpened sword, in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me into a polished arrow and concealed me in his quiver.

<sup>3</sup>He said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will display my splendour."

<sup>4</sup>But I said, "I have laboured to no purpose; I have spent my strength in vain and for nothing. Yet what is due me is in the LORD's hand, and my reward is with my God."

<sup>5</sup>And now the LORD says - he who formed me in the womb to be his servant to bring Jacob back to him and gather Israel to himself, for I am honoured in the eyes of the LORD and my God has been my strength -

<sup>6</sup>he says: “It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.”

### **Epistle Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:1-9**

Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes, <sup>2</sup>To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ - their Lord and ours: <sup>3</sup>Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup>I always thank God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. <sup>5</sup>For in him you have been enriched in every way—in all your speaking and in all your knowledge— <sup>6</sup>because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you. <sup>7</sup>Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. <sup>8</sup>He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup>God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

### **Choir Anthem (or alternate hymn / song) may be sung**

#### **Children’s Message**

#### **The Profession of Faith: “We Believe”**

(Melody: “Joyful, Joyful”)

We believe in God Almighty, Father, Son, and Spirit—One.  
God the powerful Creator Spoke the Word, and it was done.  
Heav’n and earth broke forth in goodness  
And declared their Maker’s praise.  
All that is, both seen and unseen, Works divinely-ordered ways.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only son of God.  
Earthly minds must bow before Him, By His myst’ry overawed.  
He, before the rolling ages, Was begotten as the Son,  
God from God and Light from Light, With the Father equal, One.

Born of Mary, Virgin, graceful, By the Spirit’s pow’r He came;  
For our sake by Pilate sentenced—On the cross His tortured frame.  
Suffered, buried, then arising On the third day, as ordained;  
He ascended into Heaven, And has thus forever reigned.

He will come again in glory, Seeking all, both great and small.  
Those then living and those sleeping Shall endure the judgment hall.  
His the kingdom never ending; His the Lordship and renown.  
Ours the faith that waits His coming;  
Ours the hope, the joy, the crown.

We believe the Holy Spirit Gives the gifts of here and now—  
Lord, Life-giver, moving, working, To Him also all must bow.  
He has spoken through the prophets; He has spoken in the Church,  
One and holy, apostolic, To be spread o'er all the earth.

One the faith and one the washing Taking all our sins away.  
One the hope of final rising On the Father's certain day.  
Then, for all who follow Jesus—Mercy, peace, and life restored—  
Ever-lasting, ever-living, Adoration of the Lord.

[Acknowledgment: *We Believe* – Words by James L. Barkenquast. © 1981. Used by permission.]

### **Gospel Reading: John 1:29-41**

<sup>29</sup>The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! <sup>30</sup>This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’ <sup>31</sup>I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.”

<sup>32</sup>Then John gave this testimony: “I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. <sup>33</sup>I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’ <sup>34</sup>I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God.”

<sup>35</sup>The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. <sup>36</sup>When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, “Look, the Lamb of God!”

<sup>37</sup>When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. <sup>38</sup>Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, “What do you want?” They said, “Rabbi” (which means Teacher), “where are you staying?”

<sup>39</sup>“Come,” he replied, “and you will see.”

So they went and saw where he was staying, and spent that day with him. It was about the tenth hour.

<sup>40</sup>Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. <sup>41</sup>The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, “We have found the Messiah” (that is, the Christ).

### **Sermon**

#### **Sermon Hymn: “Lord of the Living Harvest”**

(LW # 260; TLH # 492)

## **The Offering of our Gifts and Tithes to the Lord**

RSVP Nomination Forms may be placed in the offering plate

### **The Prayers of the Church**

P: Knowing God as the Lord of the harvest of souls, let us pray to Him for the whole world, and for specific people according to their needs:

P: For Concordia University College of Alberta, for Concordia Lutheran Seminary and for Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary ... Lord, that You would continue to provide our schools of higher learning with wise and Godly teachers and professors who will equip their students with the tools needed for their future ministries... Lord, in Your mercy...

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: For students in church work programs at our seminaries and college... Lord, that You would prepare their hearts, minds and bodies for full-time work in Your harvest field and that You would give them a passion for those who don't yet know You... Lord, in Your mercy...

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: For those who are nominated as potential church workers in our congregations, and for those congregations... Lord, that You would lead the nominees in diligent prayer and the searching of Your Word as they consider Your call to full-time church work, and that all of our congregations would become places where future church workers are nurtured in love, mentored in their faith, and strengthened for a life of service to You... Lord, in Your mercy...

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: For the members of congregations where potential church workers are nominated... Lord, that You would, through the members of congregations, encourage and support church work nominees in their life's vocation, and that individual members of congregations would not only see the role they can play in supporting the nominees, but would also see the role they can play in sharing their faith and leading others to Jesus Christ... Lord, in Your mercy...

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: For Lutheran schools in our church body... Lord, that You would give their administration and staff unity in proclaiming the Gospel message and that the students who attend may be filled with eagerness to learn of You... Lord, in Your mercy...

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: For those who are outside Your kingdom... Lord, that You would send Your Holy Spirit into the hearts of those who have heard and are considering the Gospel message. Let Your Word and the Christian witness of friends, neighbours or family members have a powerful effect so that Your Word would not return empty but accomplish the purpose for which it was sent... Lord, in Your mercy...

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: For the congregations of our Synod, Lutheran Church–Canada... Lord, that You would help them to see the mission field outside their doors and make them beacons of the Gospel message in their communities... Lord in Your mercy...

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: For those who are sick, injured, hospitalized and hurting (especially...) ... Lord, that You would extend your healing power to all those in any need, comforting them with Your promise to be with them always, and assuring them of the promise of the resurrection for all who believe in Christ... Lord, in Your mercy...

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: For Christian homes... Lord, that You would equip parents and guardians to be teachers of the true faith to the children in their care and that You would make our homes places where Your Word is loved and cherished... Lord in Your mercy...

**C: Hear our prayer.**

P: Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

[Holy Communion, if celebrated, may follow the order normally used in the local congregation. Appropriate hymns / songs may be sung during Communion. If Holy Communion is not celebrated, the Prayers may conclude with the Lord's Prayer, followed by the Benediction.]

### **Benediction**

P: May the Lord of the Harvest equip you and send you as workers into His harvest field of souls, giving you courage, boldness and joy as you share the message of forgiveness and life eternal through Jesus. Go in peace, serve the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God!**

**Closing Hymn: "Forth in the Name of Jesus" (GPS p. 36)**

### **Alternate Opening Hymns / Songs:**

*Listen, God is Calling* (HS 98 # 872)

*Brothers and Sisters in Christ* (SSS p. 7)

*City on a Hill* (GPS p. 63)

*The People That in Darkness Sat* (LW # 77; TLH # 106)

### **Alternate Sermon Hymns / Songs:**

*God of the Prophets, Bless the Prophets' Sons* (LW # 258; TLH # 483)

*Christ Be My Leader* (LW # 365)

*Cry of My Heart* (Together Again for the Very First Time – CREW Songbook, p. 12. Copyright permission needed)

*Sometimes by Step* (Together Again for the Very First Time – CREW Songbook, p. 28. Copyright permission needed or CCLI licence)

### **Suggested Closing Hymns / Songs:**

*A Mighty Fortress* (LW # 297; TLH # 262; LBW # 229)

*One Lord for Every Land* (GPS p. 35)

*Make Me A Servant* (SSS p. 34)

*Sent Forth By God's Blessing* (LW # 247; LBW # 221)

*Shine, Jesus, Shine* (SSS p. 24)

*Shout to the Lord* (Together Again for the Very First Time – CREW Songbook, p. 24. Copyright permission needed or CCLI licence)

*Shout to the North* (Together Again for the Very First Time – CREW Songbook, p. 26. Copyright permission needed or CCLI licence)

### **Hymn / Song Resource Books**

LW – Lutheran Worship

TLH – The Lutheran Hymnal

LBW – Lutheran Book of Worship

HS 98 – Hymnal Supplement 98

SSS – Singing Saints Songbook (LCMS Youth Ministry Song Book)

GPS – God's People Sing (LCC Hymn Book)

Together Again for the Very First Time (CREW Songbook)

### **Alternate Benedictions**

May be taken from any of the following Bible passages: Romans 15:5,6; Romans 15:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:23,24; Hebrews 13:20,21; 2 Peter 3:18; Jude 24,25.

### **Suggestion:**

Past church worker recruitment nominees or family members of current or past church workers could be asked to serve as lector.

**NOTE:** The Introit and Bible Readings are those for the Second Sunday after the Epiphany – Series A.

**NOTE:** The words for the creedal hymn *We Believe* were originally composed by Pastor James L. Barkenquast (ELCA) in 1981. They were composed for a Reformation Sunday, October 25, 1981 Chorale Service of Holy Communion for congregations in the Flint, Michigan area.

## Sermon Resources / Exegetical Notes

The lessons for this second Sunday of the Epiphany are well suited to our RSVP effort, and the theme, *“The Church’s schools of Higher Education Prepare Strong Servants.”*

- In the appointed psalm (Psalm 92:1-5) we hear the inspired writer remind us that it is good “to proclaim your love in the morning, your faithfulness at night.” A similar idea is echoed in the Introit, where the psalmist says, “I do not conceal Your love and Your truth from the great assembly”. In the antiphon we read, “I do not hide your righteousness in my heart; I speak of your faithfulness and salvation.”
- In the Epistle (1 Corinthians 1:1-9), Paul gives thanks that his preaching has been accepted by the Corinthians, and that the truth of the Word of life was evident in them.
- John has been teaching His disciples, and proclaims the greatest lesson of all, as he points to Jesus as the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. Andrew’s response to Jesus shows the eagerness of those who hear that message - he goes and finds his brother and tells him, “We have found the Messiah!
- the Old Testament lesson, sometimes referred to as the Great Commission of the Old Testament speaks of the Servant who has been set apart to bring light to the Gentiles.

In these lessons, the proclamation of the Word as God’s light and salvation is central. We have chosen the Old Testament lesson, based on the second of Isaiah’s Servant Songs, as a way of reminding ourselves that God has called His Church to bring that light to the world, and that we do that as those sent out as servants of The Servant. Through our RSVP efforts, we seek those who will be trained and prepared to be strong servants who carry that message to the world and who will “prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.” (Eph. 4:12)

### Exegetical Notes:

v.1 Much has been written about the identity of the Servant in this text. In the New Testament, the Servant of Isaiah refers to Jesus. What is said of the Servant is so unique, so glorious, that it reaches far beyond the call and performance of any individual, and surely beyond what we see as the reality in the nation of Israel. Jesus is the embodiment of the true Israel. He is the One set apart from the foundations of the world to be God’s salvation for the nations.

The call is an aspect that can be pursued here - the Lord speaks in similar ways of the call of Jeremiah (Jer. 1:5) and of Paul (Gal. 1:15). He continues to call those whom He will use to proclaim His message of redemption.

V.2 Like the double-edged sword which came from one “like a son of man” in John’s vision in Revelation (Rev. 1:16; 2:12, 16; cf. Eph. 6:17, Heb. 4:12), the Servant’s mouth is like “a sharpened sword.” As it comes from the mouth, the sword is associated with the Word of God, both the word of authority and the word of judgement.

It has been said that speech is the most God-like faculty in man. The mouth is used to announce the good news of Christ, the Eternal Word. However, mouths must be surrendered to the Lord.

The “polished arrow” reminds us of God’s arrows of judgement (Deuteronomy 32:23, 42). Both the sword and the arrow are ready for use, kept for the time of need. Through His Word, God defends and delivers those who are poor in spirit, while that same Word cuts down those who are opposed to Him.

V. 3 The Servant is the true Israel, who achieves the Lord’s purposes and brings glory to God. That purpose is set forth in v. 6. The triumphant Christ commissions His church to carry out that ministry.

V.4 The task of the Servant is not always successful and often marked with disappointment. But there is confidence in the gracious God who will be His reward. The resurrection vindicates Christ’s work, a vivid reminder that God is pleased and has accepted the sacrifice of His Son for the redemption of the world.

In the same way, the Church continues on, confident that God will give success. (Ps. 31:23-24). His Word will always accomplish what He desires. (Is. 55:11)

v.5 God’s assignment for the Messiah begins with the restoration and redemption of Israel. Commentators note that “to bring Jacob back to him and gather Israel to himself” is a prophecy regarding the restoration after the Babylonian captivity. There is a greater deliverance and restoration, from the power of sin – and this sets up the greater plan of God, that extends to the whole world.

V.6 It is too small a thing to redeem only lost Israel. The work of the Servant (that same work carried out in the church today) reaches out to the Gentiles and to the very ends of the earth. The church, through servants who are strengthened by training and education in the Word, goes forth to bring His Light to the nations. This work, so powerfully completed in the Suffering Servant requires more than an individual in the church, or even a whole congregation. It is our work together that enables us to prepare workers who will preach, teach, encourage—and help others serve the Lord with their gifts.

**Sermon for January 20, 2002**  
**Second Sunday after Epiphany (Series A)**  
**Title: Think Big!**  
**Text: Isaiah 49:1-6**

*<sup>1</sup> Listen to me, you islands; hear this, you distant nations: Before I was born the LORD called me; from my birth he has made mention of my name. <sup>2</sup> He made my mouth like a sharpened sword, in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me into a polished arrow and concealed me in his quiver. <sup>3</sup> He said to me, “You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will display my splendour.” <sup>4</sup> But I said, “I have laboured to no purpose; I have spent my strength in vain and for nothing. Yet what is due me is in the LORD’s hand, and my reward is with my God.” <sup>5</sup> And now the LORD says—he who formed me in the womb to be his servant to bring Jacob back to him and gather Israel to himself, for I am honoured in the eyes of the LORD and my God has been my strength— <sup>6</sup> he says: “It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.”*

Dear Friends in Christ, and fellow redeemed:

A man went up to a workman at a construction site and asked, “What are you doing?” The man replied, “What does it look like I’m doing? I’m laying bricks.” The man went to the man next to him and asked, “What are you doing?” The man replied, “I’m constructing a wall.” He went down to the next man and asked, “What are you doing?” The man replied, “I’m helping build a cathedral to the glory of God.”

Three men, all doing the same task—but one of them could see beyond the bricks and mortar. He was thinking about the wonderful cathedral that would be the end result of all the work. He is the kind of workman employers want—a worker who “thinks big”. If a bricklayer can see himself building a cathedral to God’s glory, then surely that church which is *built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone* will also want to think big—to think of all that the church, empowered and strengthened by the Holy Spirit, can do to the glory of God.

God wants His church to ‘think big’. In these Epiphany days we remember that the Lord of Glory has burst into our world in human flesh and blood, to make known His salvation. God’s plans and purposes encompass nothing less than the salvation of the whole world. John points to Jesus as the *lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*. Isaiah speaks of the Servant of the Lord, who will bring salvation to the ends of the earth. And God has entrusted His

church with the responsibility of making make His salvation known to a lost and dying world, as He empowers us by His Spirit to bring His light of life to the nations.

Our text today is sometimes referred to as the Great Commission of the Old Testament. It is just one of many places in which the Scriptures remind us that God wants to reveal His love, His grace and His salvation to the whole of lost and dying humanity. From the very foundation of the world, God had planned the salvation of all who would believe. It was never just about Adam and Eve, who are the first to receive the promise of a Saviour from sin. It was never just about Abraham, with whom God made His covenant. It was never just about Israel the chosen people. God's purpose is far greater than that. Through the prophet Isaiah, the Lord speaks to His Servant—or perhaps it would be better to say that the Lord speaks of His Servant, for the only One who can live up to the call and expectation of our text is the Messiah, Jesus Christ. In His grace and mercy, the Lord of All reaches out to all, saying to His Servant: ***“It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.”***

How blessed we are that God thinks big! We hear John say it again: ***“Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”*** God's plan involves not just a few people, but all people. Jesus comes to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom to the people of Israel—but He reaches out beyond the borders of Israel. He offers living water to a Samaritan woman of questionable reputation. He heals the servant of a Roman centurion—and commends the centurion for his faith. He casts a demon out of the daughter of a Canaanite woman—and praises her faith, too. When the loving arms of Christ are outstretched on the cross, it is for you, for me and for all people. Through His death and resurrection, Christ is God's salvation of the earth. He is the light of life for Jew, for Gentile, for all who believe in Him.

The need for that light is as great as it ever was. There are many still lost in the darkness of sin and death. The turmoil and uncertainty of this world continually remind us of the terrible power of sin at work in the hearts of people everywhere. The struggles we see in our own lives remind us that we, too, are affected by sin's power over us. Only God's forgiveness brings light to the darkened heart. Thankfully, the Servant who is the life of all continues His light-giving ministry through His church. Peter reminds us: ***“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”*** We are charged with His commission: Think big! Bring My light to the very ends of the earth. What an awesome responsibility God has given to us! Unfortunately, it

often seems to be more of an impossible goal. For most of us the idea of sharing our faith with the people around us seems overwhelming to us. How can even begin to think about making Jesus Christ and His salvation known to the whole world?

God never asks His people for anything He has not first provided to us. He has blessed us as individuals with the gifts that we use together in His Church. We have the opportunity within our own circle of friends and family to bring light to those around us. But God thinks bigger. He calls us together as congregations, that we may use the gifts He has given to us as individuals to build up one another. As a congregation we work to reach out to the community around us. Perhaps we even send a missionary to another place. But how can one person—or one congregation, for that matter, ever hope to bring the light of God's truth to the whole world?

This is why our congregations come together in Lutheran Church—Canada. Walking together, we are able to do more than we can alone. Working together, we are able to support mission work in our districts and throughout the world. Sharing together, we are able to think big. It is too small a thing to confine our efforts to London, Winnipeg, or the Pas. It is too small a thing to focus only on Canada. By the grace of God, empowered by His Spirit, we can think big. We can be His light to the nations, and bring His salvation to the ends of the earth.

An essential component of this big thinking is our system of higher education. Through our university college and seminaries the church works together to train and equip strong servants. We help these servants to grow in the Word so that they, like sharp swords and polished arrows can go forth to share that Word of life and light. As these servants go out as pastors, teachers, missionaries, Directors of Parish Services, Directors of Outreach, or whatever other offices God leads His people to fulfil, they preach, teach, evangelize, and equip God's people for service, helping God's people to think big. As they serve the Lord and His church, these servants, strong in the Lord and equipped through the Spirit and through the discipline and training of our institutions of higher education help prepare other strong servants in God's church: servants who bring the Light of life to all people.

But what good are our schools if they are empty? What advantage is there in our various programs if there are no students studying in them? As our church continues its RSVP efforts, we recognize the need for the workers in the church—those who will study and learn, and go forth in the name of the Lord to work and serve where and when He will call them. We need those strong servants who will bring light to those in darkness as they proclaim Christ crucified and risen again. Jesus teaches us to start with prayer, asking the Lord of the Harvest to provide

the workers. But He may well answer that prayer through the encouragement we give to the men and women we see as having gifts to serve. Do you remember Andrew? After he had spent time with Jesus we are told that the first thing he did was go and invite his brother to come and see the Messiah. Led by his brother, Simon did come—and as He learned the truth of Jesus and from Jesus, he was honed by the Lord into the strong and faithful servant we now call St. Peter.

We have the schools to prepare strong servants. We have a world in need of their ministry. We even have the future pastors and workers the Lord has set apart for His service. We just haven't identified them all yet. We haven't trained them yet. But by the grace of God we will identify them, prepare them, and send them forth in His name to accomplish His purpose. Paul reminds us that ***God, who has called you into fellowship with His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.*** He will bless our seminaries, our university college, our schools in general, as they work to prepare servants for His church. He will raise up workers. And He will grant success to His church; the Church which thinks big and which goes forth in His name and in His stead to bring His salvation in Jesus Christ to the very ends of the earth.

Amen.

# **Adult Bible Study**

## **Sunday, January 20, 2002**

### **The Church's Schools of Higher Education Prepare Strong Servants**

#### **Opening hymn:**

187 (LW) "When All The World Was Cursed" or 83 (LW) "O God of God, O Light of Light"

#### **Prayer:**

page 131 (LW) "For Seminaries and Church Colleges"

#### **Focus Statement**

God prepares future pastors and church workers for action in professional church work through a process that begins in Christian homes, continues in the local congregation and culminates in centres of higher education at the church's university or seminaries. The church's schools of higher education then prepare strong servants for the church. Strong Servants proclaim The Servant, Jesus Christ.

#### **The Servant**

1. Read the Old Testament Lesson for today: Isaiah 49:1-6. This is the second of four Servant Songs in Isaiah that prophesy about the Messiah. In the text, the Messiah is called to be a servant of the Lord. What is the mission of the servant (v.5 - 6)?
2. In verse 2 what does it mean that "He made my mouth like a sharpened sword?" See also Ephesians 6:17 and Hebrews 4:12. Why might it be important to be educated in how to preach and teach the Word of God?
3. In verse 4, how does the Servant characterize his ministry? How does this characterize Jesus' ministry? What does verse 4 say will be the ultimate outcome?
4. You may be more familiar with the fourth Servant Song in Isaiah 52:13 - 53:12. Read Isaiah 53:3-7. How is the Servant of God also our servant? Why is the comparison of the Servant to a lamb particularly meaningful?
5. Read Isaiah 49:6 again. Does it sound familiar? Check out Luke 2:25-32. What is the significance of singing the Nunc Dimittis (Simeon's Song) after receiving Christ's body and blood for the forgiveness of sins?

## **God's Servants Proclaim The Servant**

6. Read the Gospel Lesson for today: John 1:29-41. John proclaims Jesus to be “the Lamb, of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” What does John mean when he calls Jesus “the Lamb of God”? What does Andrew take it to mean? Can you see from our study of Isaiah how Andrew came to that conclusion?

7. Does John’s proclamation of Jesus sound familiar? What is the significance of singing the Agnus Dei before communing?

8. As a servant of God, what is John called to do (John 1:34; 1:6-9)? What happens as a result?

9. The disciples at first did not understand the nature of the ministry they were being called to. James and John requested Jesus to “Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory.” They were requesting positions of prestige and power. It then says “when the ten heard about this they became indignant with James and John.” Read Jesus’ response in Mark 10:42-45. What is the nature of ministry to be? How does Jesus show that He is the Messiah that Isaiah had prophesied of?

10. After the resurrection, Jesus commissioned the church to share in his mission of salvation. Read Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16 and Acts 1:8. As servants, what are the Apostles called to do and what is the church to be doing?

11. What makes God’s servants “strong”? (Romans 1:16; Romans 10:17; 1 Peter 1:23; Titus 3:5; John 20:22-23; Matthew 26:27-28)

## **Strong Servants**

Pastors and Deacons are strong servants of the Lord when they realize they have no strength in themselves nor in any other thing but the Word of God and the Sacraments. As a church we confess:

So that we may obtain this faith, the ministry of teaching the gospel and administering the sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and the sacraments as through instruments the Holy Spirit is given, who effects faith where and when it pleases God in those who hear the gospel, that is to say, in those who hear that God, not on account of our own merits but on account of Christ, justifies those who believe that they are received into grace on account of Christ. (Augsburg Confession, Article V).

Pastors serve by proclaiming to the world God’s strong Word, the testimony of The Servant who has redeemed us by His sacrifice on the cross for our sins. God’s servants are strong when they point people to the Word and Sacraments

through which the Holy Spirit works to create and sustain saving faith in Jesus Christ. The Office of Public Ministry is one of service, preaching the gospel and administering the sacraments. The Office of Deacon (including Directors of Parish Services, teachers, parish nurses and other professional church workers) is one of service to the pastor and the congregation as together they witness to Christ, The Servant of all.

### **True Wisdom**

Our institutions of higher learning prepare strong servants by teaching them where true wisdom and power lie.

12. The fact that we have institutions of higher learning supported by congregations implies that there is a need that our institutions fulfil that others cannot. Why do we need church-supported university colleges and seminaries? The theme verse that Concordia University College has operated under now for 80 years gets at the heart of the issue: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.” (Proverbs 9:10; Psalm 111:10). What is true wisdom? In contrast, what is true folly (Psalm 14:1)?

13. How does this contrast with the way the world views wisdom and foolishness?

14. Read 1 Corinthians 1:18 - 25. Discuss what is wisdom and what is folly according to these passages. How should Christian Higher education be different from that of secular institutions? Why is it important that we have our own seminaries and university college to train future pastors and deacons?

### **Our Institutions of Higher Education**

Lutheran Church–Canada has three institutions of higher education where strong servants are prepared:

#### **Concordia University College of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta**

- Deacons
- Directors of Parish Services (DPS)
- Teachers
- Parish Nurses

#### **Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines, Ontario and Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, Alberta**

- Pastors

(In addition, our institutions prepare servants for vocations other than full time church work.)

15. What can you as an individuals and as a congregation do to support our schools?

16. Likewise, what can you do as a congregation to support future servants of the church as they attend the church's schools of higher education?

17. If time permits, read the following mission statements of our schools and discuss how they reflect what we have learned today:

### **The Mission Statement for Concordia University College of Alberta**

Founded in 1921, Concordia University College of Alberta is an accredited liberal arts university college of Lutheran Church–Canada. It is the mission of Concordia to offer a quality education in a Christian context while sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, aiding students to develop a sense of vocation and preparing them for leadership in the world.

### **A Mission Statement For Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines, Ontario**

Because God would have no one perish, but all be saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and, in order that we might obtain this faith, has instituted the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments,

therefore Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines, exists to serve God's mission by preparing servants for the Holy Ministry of Word and Sacrament in order that people of every land might be brought to saving faith, be instructed in the divine doctrine, show forth the goodness of God, and be kept safe in faith to eternal life with their Lord.

### **The Mission Statement for Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Edmonton, Alberta**

Concordia Lutheran Seminary, a seminary of Lutheran Church - Canada, educates pastors and lay leaders, servants called and sent by the Holy Spirit, to witness to salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and to serve in God's world.

Theme verse: "For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake." 2 Corinthians 4:5

### **Close with prayer**

#### **Websites:**

Lutheran Church–Canada	<a href="http://www.lutheranchurch.ca">www.lutheranchurch.ca</a>
Concordia University College of Alberta	<a href="http://www.concordia.ab.ca">www.concordia.ab.ca</a>
Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary	<a href="http://www.brocku.ca/concordiaseminary">www.brocku.ca/concordiaseminary</a>
Concordia Lutheran Seminary	<a href="http://www.concordiasem.ab.ca">www.concordiasem.ab.ca</a>

# **Youth Bible Study**

## **January 20, 2002**

### **Leader's Guide**

This Bible study is the third part in the RSVP series which is designed to assist congregations in encouraging people to enter into a full-time church work position. In the first part, the focus was on the role of the family in nurturing church workers. Last year's focus was on the role of the congregation in encouraging future church workers. This year's focus is the role that our seminaries and our university college have in educating church workers.

This Bible study was written for young people in your congregation who are between the ages of 13 and 18. As a youth leader, I have gotten to know the youth in my church quite well, and have seen the gifts that each of them have. Our job is to encourage the youth to use these gifts in whichever profession they choose to follow, but also to encourage those with gifts that are suited for church work professions: pastors, teachers and directors of parish services (DPS). Keep your youth in your prayers, especially as you prepare for this Bible study, that the Holy Spirit would work in their hearts as they consider their future.

#### **Study Objectives:**

By working through this study, each youth will:

- identify some of the different ways that they are taught
- understand the trust that is required to learn from someone
- realize the importance of Christian education
- recognize the need to have a qualified teachers

#### **Materials:**

- Bibles
- a book written in a foreign language (Check with your pastor about a book in Greek or Hebrew!)
- blindfold
- chocolate bars
- copies of the cross picture
- scissors
- a catalogue/calendar or flyer from Concordia University College of Alberta and our two Lutheran seminaries

#### **Location:**

If possible, arrange for the Hidden Object activity to be done in an open room, or somewhere that doesn't contain too many objects to run into.

## **Part One: The Need for an Education**

- As the youth are arriving, and sitting down, pass around a book, preferably one in Greek or Hebrew, and ask them to read a passage from it.
- If there are no volunteers, ask them why they won't read it.
- When you get a response about not knowing the language, etc, ask if any of them could learn the language from looking at this book. Give them an opportunity to respond, then:

### **Introduce the Topic**

- Today's study is about education.
- Where can you get an education?
- Who can give it to you?
- Why would you want one?
- Read Acts 7:20-22
- Moses was able to be a good leader of God's people because he was educated. His education with the Egyptians was a preparation for what was to follow. God can use the education we receive at school and different events in our lives to teach us what we need to know to follow Him better.

## **Part Two: The Need to Listen and Follow**

### **Activity: Communication Puzzle**

#### **Objective:**

The youth should learn how to verbally communicate clear instructions or how to listen to and follow clear verbal instructions.

#### **What you will need:**

Scissors

Copies of the cross puzzle which follows

#### **Instructions:**

- Make a copy of the cross for each of your students, but have half of the crosses cut out into pieces.
- Pair up the students, and have them sit with their backs together. Tell them that they will be making a puzzle, with one person having the pieces and the other giving instructions on how to put them together.
- Hand out a picture of the cross to one of them and the pieces to another, but tell those who have the picture not to tell the others what the picture is. Give them five minutes to try to put the puzzle together, with one person putting it together and the other telling them how.
- When the exercise is finished, you can ask them the following questions:

- How did you feel when you were giving the instructions?
- How did you feel when you were trying to follow them?
- If you were putting the puzzle together, were you tempted to ignore the instructions and just try to do it on your own? Why? Did it work?
- Read Luke 10:38-42; John 10:25-30; and James 1:22-25
- What are these passages trying to point out? (Listen to what Jesus says, and then follow what He says)

### **Part Three: The Need for a Good Teacher (Who Should You Listen To?)**

#### **Activity: Hidden Object**

##### **Objective:**

The object of this exercise will be to show youth that although you can learn things in many ways, the best way to learn something is to have someone teach you, particularly someone that you can trust to teach you correctly.

##### **What you will need:**

4 chocolate bars

1 blindfold

1 open room that someone can walk in blindfolded without injuring themselves.

4 volunteers

- Have each volunteer leave the room before it's their turn while you explain to the class what they are supposed to do.
- Put a blindfold on your first volunteer and let them know what they're looking for, and that they have one minute to find it. While they are still outside the room, hide the chocolate bar and remind the class to sit quietly, then let the volunteer in. When the minute is up, have them take off the blindfold and sit down. (If they didn't find it, you can give them the chocolate bar after the class is over.)
- Put a blindfold on the second volunteer and repeat the process, but this time put the chocolate bar in a different place and this time instruct the rest of the group that they should shout out instructions to him/her - half of them shouting out the wrong instructions and half of them shouting out the right ones. If they haven't found it when the minute was up, have them take off the blindfold and sit down.
- Repeat the whole process again, but this time, instead of giving them a minute to find it, have one of the other youth go up, get the chocolate bar, and give it to them. Then have them take off the blindfold and sit down.-
- For the final volunteer, give them a minute to find the chocolate bar, but this time ask one of the other youth to give them correct verbal instructions on how to find the chocolate bar. After the minute is over or the chocolate bar is found, have them take off the blindfold and sit down.
- After all four volunteers have had their turn, ask the following questions:
- To the four volunteers: How did this experience make you feel?

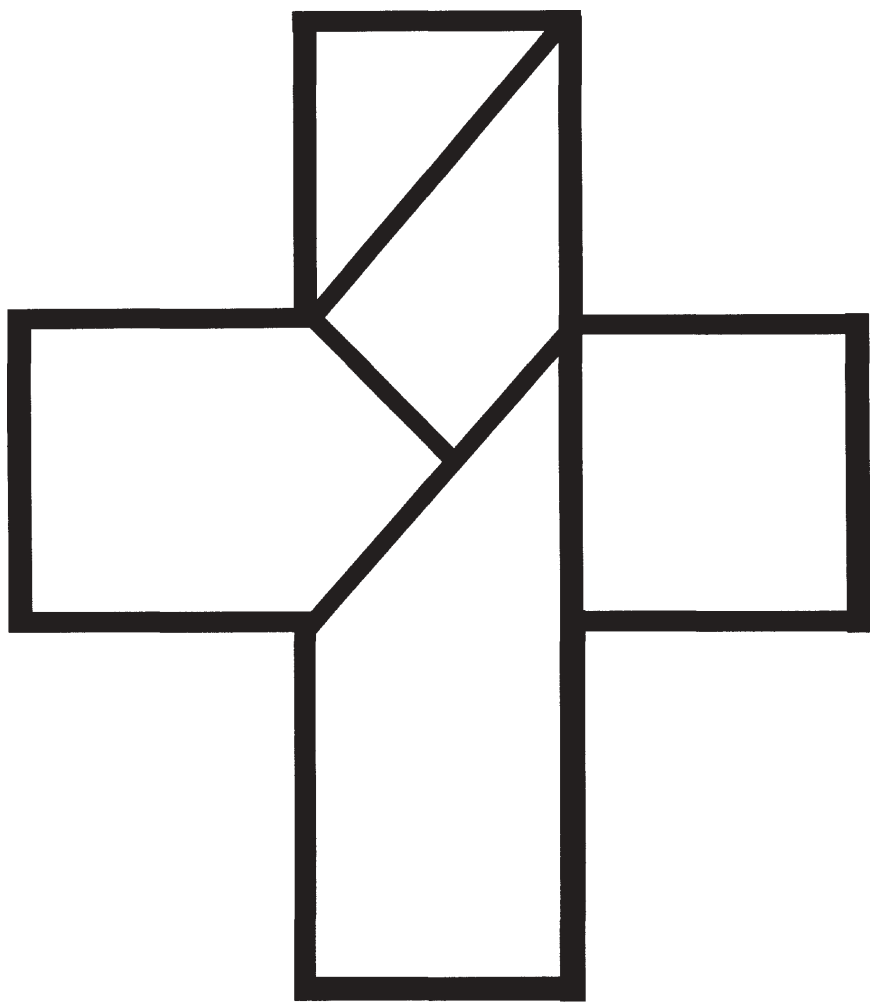
- To the class: How did it feel to watch them try to find the chocolate bars?
- To the four volunteers: What did you learn when you were trying to find the chocolate bars?
- To the class: What was the point of this exercise?
- Have someone read Ecclesiastes 9:17 and Proverbs 13:20.
- There are many ways to learn, and many different teachers in life. Some teachers will just let you figure it out on your own; some teachers won't teach you the truth or the right things; some teachers will just give you the answers; and some teachers will give you good instructions in how to find the answers.
- Have the youth give some examples of times that people have taught them in these different ways.
- Which kind of teacher is the best to have?

## **Part Four: The Need for a Christian Education**

- What's the difference between education and Christian education? (You can point out that while Christian education is taught in church or in the family, there is also education in a Christian setting.)
- Why do people need a Christian education?
- Do you need Christian education when you're in public school? Why/why not?
- What about when you are in post-secondary school?
- What good is a Christian education?
- Who specifically needs to be trained in a Christian school? Why?
- Where can you get a Christian training?
- At this point, you can show your students any material you may have from Concordia University College of Alberta or one of the seminaries.
- Have someone read Romans 15:14-16.
- What responsibility comes with receiving a Christian education?
- In this passage, Paul is reminding the Romans of the education that they received about Jesus and living a Christian life. They needed to be encouraged to remember what they had been taught and make it a part of their lives and then reach out to teach others.
- For an extra point of interest, you can have the youth find someone within their congregation who is attending or has attended a Lutheran post-secondary institution and ask them these questions, then report back at your next meeting with the responses.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Dear Lord, please be with each one of us as we continue to grow in knowledge of You and Your will for us. Help us as we consider our future career choices and how we can use the gifts that You have given us to reach out to others with Your message of love and forgiveness. Be with and bless those who are studying to be church workers now, and those who are considering it. In Your Son's name, Amen.



# **Youth Bible Study**

## **January 20, 2002**

### **Student's Sheet**

#### **Part One: The Need for an Education**

- Where can you get an education?
- Who can give it to you?
- Why would you want one?
- Read Acts 7:20-22

#### **Part Two: The Need to Listen and Follow**

##### **Activity: Communication Puzzle**

- How did you feel when you were giving the instructions?
- How did you feel when you were trying to follow them?
- If you were putting the puzzle together, were you tempted to ignore the instructions and just try to do it on your own? Why? Did it work?
- Read Luke 10:38-42; John 10:25-30; and James 1:22-25
- What are these passages trying to point out?

#### **Part Three: The Need for a Good Teacher (Who Should You Listen To?)**

##### **Activity: Hidden Object**

- To the four volunteers: How did this experience make you feel?
- To the class: How did it feel to watch them try to find the chocolate bars?
- To the four volunteers: What did you learn when you were trying to find the chocolate bars?
- To the class: What was the point of this exercise?

- Read Ecclesiastes 9:17 and Proverbs 13:20.
- Give some examples of times that people have taught them in these different ways.
- Which kind of teacher is the best to have?

## **Part Four: The Need for a Christian Education**

- What is Christian education?
- What's the difference between education and Christian education?
- Is there a difference?
- Why do people need a Christian education?
- Do you need Christian education when you're in public school? Why?
- What about when you are in post-secondary school? What good does it do?
- Who specifically needs to be trained in a Christian school? Why?
- Where can you get one?
- Have someone read Romans 15:14-16.
- What responsibility comes with receiving a Christian education?

### **Websites:**

Lutheran Church–Canada	<a href="http://www.lutheranchurch.ca">www.lutheranchurch.ca</a>
Concordia University College of Alberta	<a href="http://www.concordia.ab.ca">www.concordia.ab.ca</a>
Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary	<a href="http://www.brocku.ca/concordiaseminary">www.brocku.ca/concordiaseminary</a>
Concordia Lutheran Seminary	<a href="http://www.concordiasem.ab.ca">www.concordiasem.ab.ca</a>



**Prepare for Action–RSVP02** is a recruitment initiative of Lutheran Church–Canada which asks members of congregations to identify men and women whom they believe have the gifts and talents for church work vocations.

## **Prepare for Action–RSVP02**

### **Pastor’s Interview and Evaluation Form**

One of the key elements in identifying and encouraging future church workers is the follow-up by the pastor. There are two important aspects of the pastor’s follow-up:

- 1) an interview with each person suggested on the nomination forms, and
- 2) the submission of those names to President Mayan for referral to the appropriate institution for future follow-up.

#### **Pastor’s Interview**

After you have received the nomination forms, take a moment to thank God for each name submitted and ask for His guidance during your interview. The following are suggestions to help you in the interview:

1. Phone to set up the appointment. The person may already be aware that the congregation has been asked to submit names of future church workers. Inform the person that he/she has been identified by fellow church members as a possible future church worker and that you would like to meet to discuss this with him/her. **(In the case of children or youth who are nominated, parents should be advised of the nomination and be present during the interview. The initiative should be explained so that parents are fully informed.)**

2. A good place to begin is with the four qualities (see nomination form) which others have seen in this individual which have led them to suggest his/her name as a future church worker. You might want to ask: “Do you see yourself in this way?” “Have you ever considered a church work career?” “Are there areas here at church where you would like to become involved?” (e.g. teaching Sunday school, helping with VBS, acolyte, hospital visitation, lector, altar guild, etc.)

3. Share with the person some of your own joys in the ministry. What pastoral tasks do you enjoy? What has been truly rewarding? How have you seen others grow in faith? When was a time when you felt you really made a difference in someone’s life? Help them to see different opportunities for ministry as a pastor, a teacher, a director of parish services, a missionary, etc.

4. Ask for permission to share their name with Concordia University College or one of our seminaries: “I’d like to let our seminaries know that you have been identified as a possible future church worker. Is that okay with you?” (Explain that they would receive information from the seminaries or college.)

5. Before you leave, take a moment to pray with the individual, giving thanks to God for the opportunity to discuss the work of the church with this person.

## **Submission of Names**

Following your interview, please fill out one *Evaluation Form* for each person you interview. (Please photocopy additional forms as needed.) The evaluation forms then should be sent to President Ralph Mayan by March 1 (if possible). It would also be appropriate to phone those who submitted names, thanking them for their participation and letting them know that you interviewed the person they suggested.

We thank you for your participation in this effort. The task of recruiting future church workers is not the task of the pastor alone, but of all God's people. It is our prayer that we can help all our people accept greater responsibility in identifying, encouraging and supporting our future professional church workers.

## Prepare for Action – RSVP02 Interview Evaluation Form

Date of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Home church: \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor: \_\_\_\_\_

1. This person's level of interest: (circle one) Low Medium High

2. For which church work profession is this person most suitable?  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What impresses you about him/her?  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. How do you see this person in his/her relationship...  
a. to the Lord?  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. to the church?  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Please include any other matters you would like to share.  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Return this form to:**

**Lutheran Church–Canada, 3074 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3K 0Y2**

This recruitment initiative is based on a program *Called By Name* developed by the Archdiocese of Winnipeg.

**Project Coordinator:** Rev. James Fritsche, third vice-president, Lutheran Church–Canada on behalf of the Council of Presidents and the Board for Higher Education

**Worship Service:** Rev. Laverne Hautz and Susan Bernhardt (DPS), Foothills Lutheran Church, Calgary

**Sermon:** Rev. David Bode, pastor, Faith Lutheran Church, London, Ontario

**Adult Bible study:** Rev. Jonathan Kraemer, pastor, Peace/Trinity, Trail/Fruitvale, B.C.

**Youth Bible study:** Christine Runnalls, DPS, Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Moose Jaw, Sask.

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All elements of this booklet and previous years' material are available in Adobe Acrobat format on the Internet at:

**[www.lutheranchurch.ca/RSVP/](http://www.lutheranchurch.ca/RSVP/)**

For further information call 1-800-588-4226.



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