

## School for Lay Ministry

### **Serving the synod of Eastern North Dakota and Northwestern Minnesota**



*An so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice, the kind he will accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is this too much to ask? Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect His will really is.*

Romans 12:1-2

## **Purpose**

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The School of Lay Ministry's purpose is to provide Adult Christian Education in the areas of Worship, Old and New Testament, Lutheran Confessions, Pastoral Care, and Church History. To do this, we draw on the gifts of seminary professors, those who serve in specialized ministries, and others.

**What is expected?** While some of the participants of the program do fill in for pastors or serve congregations in other ways, this is not the expectation. Many come to learn more and grow in their faith. We would love to see you there!

We believe in the life-long calling to live out our baptismal covenant, to learn, to grow, to serve, and to love one another. Our synods' school for lay ministry embraces the vital ministry of helping God's people to discern and use their gifts with confidence within their families, friends, congregations, and communities.

We seek to deepen the understanding of theologically-curious laity; and empower lay people to serve their congregations as life-long learners, educators, friendly visitors to those in need, evangelists, lay preachers, worship leaders, musicians, ministers of prayer, and other pathways to serving God and neighbor.

## **History**

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The present program originated in the western North Dakota District, ALC, in the 1980s. It was a program to equip lay people to preach where ordained people were unavailable. Parishes heard about this opportunity and schools of lay ministry (formerly called GIFTS) were established in each respective synod.

In 2011, the Northwestern Minnesota and Eastern North Dakota synods joined together to share and grow this ministry. In addition to supporting lay preaching, the program now provides education for lay people for their own purposes and edification, as well as equips lay people to serve their neighbors as Bible study leaders, Sunday School teachers, parish visitors, music leaders, and in many other ways.

## Certificate Program

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Completion of the certificate program is not necessarily the goal of people who attend School for Lay Ministry classes. If a participant wishes to work toward a certificate, they must **complete of all six categories** required for eligibility (Old Testament, New Testament, Worship and Liturgy, Pastoral Care, Lutheran Confessions, and Church History). Attendance **at least one session of a [Luther Seminary's School for Lay Ministry classes](#)**, can help fulfill one curriculum category requirement.



People often continue attending classes after they obtain a certificate as part of their **life-long learning** to live out their baptismal covenant.

**Students should keep track of their own credits**, and when they have completed the 6 course categories and seminary session, they can submit a request to the School of Lay Ministry Advisory Committee for approval to receive a certificate. The certificate grants no special privileges.

[Click here to find a helpful worksheet to keep track of completed classes.](#)

## Curriculum

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Classes are offered at a central location three times per year. Courses are usually offered in **October, February, and April**.

Courses are usually held from 10:00am to 4:00pm on a **Saturday**.

Over a two year period, courses are offered in:

1. Old Testament
2. New Testament
3. Worship and Liturgy
4. Pastoral Care
5. Lutheran Confessions
6. Church History

To teach these classes, we draw on the gifts of seminary professors, those who serve in specialized ministries, and others.



## **Cost**

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At present, the fee is \$50 which includes morning refreshments and a noon meal.

## **Application**

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If you or someone you know would like to participate in the certification program, download the [School for Lay Ministry Program Application Form](#) on our website.

Please fill out and mail to the Eastern North Dakota Synod Office.

## **More information**

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For detailed information about this year's School for Lay Ministry, [download the brochure](#).

Feel free to print and share this brochure in your congregation or with people in whom you see the gifts and desire to be a part of this ministry.

## **Contact Information**

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**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.