

## Psychological Evaluation and Career Consultation

*Confidential: Candidacy use only by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)*

*Note: The results are considered valid until November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025*

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Name: Angel Scott

DOB: 09/13/1978

Date of Assessment: 11/09/2024

Psychologist: Bjorn Hanson, PhD (WI License: 3202-57)

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### Assessment Overview

Referral: Angel was referred for psychological evaluation and career consultation by the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin as part of Angel's candidacy process. She is pursuing Word and Sacrament ministry and is hoping to transfer to the ELCA from the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ.

Sources of information:

- 1) Clinical interview on 11/09/2024
- 2) Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-3 (MMPI-3)
- 3) 16PF 5<sup>th</sup> Edition Questionnaire
- 4) Campbell Interest and Skill Survey (CISS)
- 5) PHQ-9
- 6) GAD-7

### Personality and Interest Testing Results

**MMPI-3:** Validity scales suggested that Angel may be presenting herself in a positive light, so lack of elevated scales should be interpreted with caution, though any elevated scales could be interpreted. There was no evidence of psychopathology from the results. Low elevation scales (i.e. below the average level, which could be impacted by the response style suggested by the validity scales) suggested a below average amount of worry, anxiety, impulsivity, or "negative" emotions. No evidence of anxiety or mood disorders; no evidence of antisocial or narcissistic traits.

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**PHQ-9 and GAD-7:** These symptom surveys assess depression and anxiety symptoms in the past two weeks. Neither scale was indicative of clinically significant, current concerns with anxiety or depression.

**16PF:** Results suggest that Angel displays a moderate level of extraversion, appearing willing to engage socially with others, neither afraid of having the attention on her nor needing the attention on her. She will likely be experienced as slightly reserved, though willing to self-disclose when appropriate. Angel appears equally comfortable completing tasks as part of a team or on her own. Results suggest an openness to change and an accommodating disposition, being slightly more inclined to defer to others rather than pursue her own agenda. She has a balanced view on trust, being generally trusting while retaining healthy skepticism. When solving problems, Angel appears to be able to consider both practical and “big picture” considerations, as well as being able to consider both logic and empathy. In terms of her self-control, Angel tends to be more on the cautious side. She appears able to work in high and low structure environments. Results suggest that Angel is somewhat more calm, composed, and self-assured than most people, not often experiencing self-doubt.

**CISS:** Results suggest that Angel either rates herself more harshly than most people across all skills and orientations, or perceives herself to need more experience or knowledge within almost all of the occupational areas. The main exception is that Angel rates her skills and interest as very high when related to religious activity. Angel also has reasonable confidence in her ability to public speak and write, as well as interest in jobs that would require physical challenges and quick thinking under pressure. Angel rates herself rather low in terms of interest and skill in areas such as supervising, budgeting, planning, organization, as well as being disinterested in marketing, sales, or leadership. Angel describes high interest and low skill in academic pursuits, which can be further explored on interview. Results also suggested an extraversion profile that would make a job with high interpersonal contact a poor fit, though this is incongruent with results on the 16PF and also require follow-up. In a church context, this profile suggests interest in leading religious programs or services, with a willingness and ability to write sermons, as well as interest in developing skills related to counseling others or creating children’s programming, with less interest in creating adult programming. (Note: After the interview, it seems as though Angel’s self-report is more indicative of being humble rather than lacking skills, for example, she has admirable supervisory skills even if not in a formal manager role).

## **ELCA Criteria for Candidacy**

### ***Personal Identity, Level of Awareness, and Self-Concept***

Angel describes her identity as being anchored in baptism and as a child of God. She believes in creating communities in which we are free to be our own people and safely explore our limits, beliefs, and ourselves. Angel describes striving to be honest, responsible, knowledgeable, and being able to follow through on her word. Self-awareness is one of Angel's assets and is actively used, as she is able to clearly name areas of strength and growth. Angel describes being able to reflect on her own self-concept, trying out new parts of a role or identity, and determine if that fits her. Self-concept has increasingly included a call towards ministry. Angel presents as humble, almost to the point of selling herself short in conversation, though this humility does not limit her follow through.

### ***Quality of Past and Present Family Relationships***

Angel was born and raised in the state of Oregon by a single mother, along with one sister. Very strong relationship with mother, saying that she "let us make mistakes in a way that was safe", which eliminated her need or desire to rebel. No real relationship with her father as he left before she was two years old. Described a "typical sibling relationship" with her sister, with occasional arguments, but no major conflict. Recalls spending a lot of time playing outside with other neighborhood children. Outside of her father not being present, Angel did not report any other significant traumatic events in childhood.

In adulthood, Angel has been married for 10 years and has two twin boys in elementary school. She described appreciating the chance to build close relationships with her children. Angel and her family live in a rural area, and she stated that she enjoys the pace of life in the country. She works for local churches and this allows her to work from home often so she is able to be present with her children when they come home from school. Angel describes her husband as "super supportive", active in church, and a good male role model for the children. Before this marriage, Angel reported a prior marriage that ended in divorce without having children. Overall, Angel describes a stable, supportive home life at present.

### ***Sense of Vision or Imaginative Ability***

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Angel has the capacity for creating a vision for a church, and in our interview, she talked in detail about being a church that is focused on reaching out as an “inviter”, and emphasizing outreach as part of church life. Angel also has demonstrated the ability to complete complex academic goals, such as recently publishing a biography on a writer that she found to be interesting. As important as her own vision, Angel discussed how she is eager to collaborate with her congregation members to use their gifts, which may include welcoming and visioning.

***Intellectual Capacity***

Angel graduated from the University of Oregon as a Religious Studies major, taking courses in math, computer science, and business along the way. She is also a published author and someone who often reads. Academics, and skills such as writing and preaching, are likely to be a relative strength based on Angel’s experience and academic history.

***Integrity***

Angel appears to possess high integrity. She is forthright in her conversation and in the interview lived out her value of honesty. Angel joined the National Guard and serves as an Army chaplain in order to support her community. She also has the ability to decipher the positive and negative aspects of this type of commitment while remaining consistent with performing the job that she has accepted.

***Emotional Maturity, Durability, Coping Ability***

Angel appears to possess high emotional maturity and durability as evidenced by many years of chaplaincy work, spanning trauma centers in hospitals, to assisted living facilities, to the Army National Guard. Her descriptions of how she handles conflict and criticism (e.g., “sit down and talk about it”; providing feedback without micromanaging; being willing to have hard conversations) suggest that she will be capable of handling interpersonal stressors at work. She also did not have an egocentric view of criticism, such that she is able to listen for helpful feedback without taking criticism personally (“I am aware that the feedback is not always about me”). When overwhelmed or managing her National Guard commitment, Angel described prioritizing her tasks and identifying who can step in for her while she is unavailable. In terms of personal self-care, Angel had a variety of strategies, including hiking, socializing, or writing. She also reported regular counseling as a part of this self-care.

***Motivation for Religious Service***

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Angel reports motivation for moving to the ELCA is to use her pastoral gifts to support local congregations, noting the growing number of empty pulpits. Angel describes a desire to build a community that reaches out to the surrounding area, inviting others to join. Angel stated that she developed her own prayer life as a child, and that she explored various demoniations while growing up, which led to a variety of church experiences. Based on these experiences, she discussed wanting to create a place where people could feel God's love, rather than being "scared by the preaching of damnation". Angel placed a high value on personal relationships, noting that the less frequent contact with parishoners in parish ministry versus chaplaincy would be a trade off she would need to accept.

***Empathy and Affective Expression***

While Angel may initially present as emotionally reserved and serious, she has the capacity for deep empathy and is able to be joyful and playful as well. Testing results suggested that Angel will likely be perceived as composed and self-assured, which may put others at ease once they get to know her. With her experience as a chaplain, she has had a chance to refine empathic communication.

***Interpersonal and Relationship Skills***

Angel described enjoying getting to know others and preferring to work in settings where she is able to build strong, long-term connections. In examples she described, Angel takes a respectful approach to relationships, treating others as both competent and resilient, which allows her to give feedback, when necessary. In the course of our assessment process, email communication started more direct and terse, though the interactions became more emotionally rich and detailed as rapport was built and the communication medium shifted to an interview. Assessment results suggest that Angel has the capacity to trust others as well as the awareness to not take everything at face value. Angel described healthy boundaries between herself and congregation members, valuing showing up as a human being while being aware of the role of being a pastor (e.g., attending high school events to support youth in the congregation).

***History of Misconduct Related to Employment***

Angel denied any history of misconduct related to employment, stating that she has a good work record as she has discerned her call to this ministry.

***History of Deviant and Pathological Maladaptation***

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There are no personality characteristics suggestive of antisocial tendencies. Personality testing (i.e. MMPI-3) did not suggest the presence of concerning pathological traits.

***History of Medical and Psychiatry Illness***

Angel reported that she was in generally good physical condition due to being in the National Guard, though she recently developed stress fractures in her shin due to the rigorous training. Angel shared that she goes to counseling once or twice a month, but does not have a diagnosis; it should be noted that this is good self-care for someone who works as a chaplain and is helping others cope with death and trauma. Anxiety and worry are not common, with the topic of most worry being directed towards the wellbeing of loved ones. No history of depression and no social anxiety, per self-report. No other mental health concerns reported after a brief, broad spectrum mental health screening.

***History of Substance Abuse or Addictions***

Angel reported having no concerns with substance use, reporting that she drinks alcohol occasionally, but not in excess. She denied cannabis and other drug use.

***Flexibility***

Angel appears to be someone who is quite open to change, though does not need to create change if it is unnecessary. Though she skews slightly towards being self-reliant, she is also willing to work in a group and to showcase the gifts of others, when appropriate.

***Leadership Style***

Angel's leadership style starts with listening and getting to know the context that she is in, stating that she "wants to learn how God is already working" through a particular community. She described wanting to understand the collective knowledge of a new community and what is sacred about that group. Angel acknowledges that she, along with everyone else, is imperfect, and this leads to a humility in her leadership style. When leading a staff, she stated that "the goal is to do our jobs in a way that reflects our faith". Angel appears to have strengths in being an assertive communicator.

**Overall Summary and Recommendations**

**Pastor Angel Scott seeks to transfer into the ELCA, and she brings with her a number of skills and experiences, including being a board certified chaplain, being a preacher,**

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**being a writer, and having experience leading youth programming.** Her experiences have direct overlap for working in small congregations, hospital settings, youth settings, and nursing home settings, though she also appears to have the academic and interpersonal skills to thrive in many additional ministry settings should she so choose. Being part of a welcoming community, nurturing a robust prayer life, and building deep relationships are important to Angel, and she will likely do best in environments where she can work towards those values.

Based on this assessment, here are a few recommendations for the Candidacy committee to allow Angel to be most successful:

- 1) Acknowledge that Angel has a range of gifts for ministry, which she often undersells, and help her find a ministry context that is a good fit for her and her family.
- 2) As Angel would prefer to be an integral part of local community, consider if there are call options that would allow for this lifestyle. Whereas some candidates may prefer a larger city or to be anonymous outside of work, Angel appears to have the desire and interpersonal boundaries to be successful in filling a clergy role in a rural or small town setting.
- 3) Angel discussed her expectations that congregation members would play a large role in the inviting and welcoming atmosphere she hoped to create. She may benefit from training in how to support others in evangelical ministry and/or being placed in a setting that is ready for this type of outward facing ministry.

It was my pleasure getting to know Angel and I wish her well as she discerns her call to the ELCA.

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