

Report of the Candidacy Committee to the Southeast Michigan Synod, May 2025

This year, the candidacy committee welcomed two new members, Pastor Jeff Ogonowski and Dr. Todd Perkins. We also bid farewell to Pastor Brandon Hunt, with gratitude for his service to the candidacy committee.

As we welcomed new members to the candidacy committee, Pastor Denise Russell let the committee in a “candidacy 101” session. This time together familiarized with the candidacy process and was a good refresher for those who have been already serving on the committee. We are also awaiting updates from the ELCA Candidacy working group, which has been hard at work updating the candidacy process to bring it up to date with the current realities of the church.

We are looking forward to holding a candidacy retreat, for both current candidates and inquiring candidates later this year.

2024 Actions and Decisions

Candidate Approval: Matthew Jewell

Ordinations: Amy Cooley-Higgs, Matthew Jewell

Candidate Endorsement: Natalie Downs, Richard Durance, Alysa Offman, Michael Wentzel

Candidates on Internship: Ian Boden, Alysa Offman, Natalie Downs

Candidate Entrance: Michael Wentzel

Theological Review Panel: Richard Durance, Michael Wentzel

Candidate Awaiting Call:

Candidacy Withdrawals: Adele Steuer

Candidacy Committee Members: Dr. Robert Thompson, Pastor Jack Eggleston, Pastor Kate Zywicki, Pastor Jeff Ogonowski, Dr. Todd Perkins

Representing Trinity Seminary: The Rev. Dr. Kevin Dudley

Representing ELCA Region 6: The Rev. Denise Russell

Respectfully Submitted,

The Rev. Jennifer Kiefer, Director of Candidacy