



ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Pastoral Residency Program

An exciting two-year program for new pastors eager to sharpen their vocational identity and pastoral skills in the context of a dynamic congregation and a supportive multi-staff setting.





Program design

The goal of St. Paul's residency program is to help shape passionate pastors and prepare them for a lifetime of fulfilling leadership in the larger church. Our objective for each pastoral resident during their two years at St. Paul is that they strengthen their pastoral skills and develop their own authentic pastoral identity, based in a genuine love for ministry.

Impact

The Pastoral Residency Program has a significant influence on individual resident pastors, the St. Paul community, and the wider church. First call pastors spend two years in this large multi-staff church setting gaining a wealth of experience in parish ministry. They receive focused mentoring from Senior Pastor Mark Niethammer and encouragement from St. Paul members. Resident pastors collaborate with experienced staff and have opportunities to be brave and creative in their ministry. These residents go on to other churches with strong leadership skills and a greater sense of their own pastoral identity.

The congregation enthusiastically supports the pastoral residents; they see the future of the church in these new pastors. "They are like a breath of fresh air for our congregation, and St. Paul provides the perfect environment for them to grow in skill and self-confidence."

Pastoral Resident Activities

The resident pastors are a full part of the pastoral team. They integrate into all aspects of ministry and congregational life. Preaching, teaching, pastoral care, and leadership in groups and mission projects are all part of their role. Pastoral residents are encouraged to be creative in their ministry, starting new ministries or programs where they have a passion and see a need. Collaboration with St. Paul's experienced staff help their ideas come to fruition.



I feel like I received five years of ministry experience in two years. I was embraced by the St. Paul staff and the congregation as a pastor and part of the pastoral leadership team. I was never alone while I knew so many colleagues that were isolated. Time of reflection with colleagues was such a gift.

— LOWELL MICHELSON

Senior pastor, Lord of Life Lutheran Church, West Chester, OH

The residency program impacted me by building up my bravery and growing my confidence in a safe space. Getting comfortable in my pastoral skin. I felt really prepared to go into my next call and knew my gifts more clearly. — AMANDA FLOY

Associate pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Owatonna, MN



Structured Learning

Academic and intellectual inquiry are an important part of the Pastoral Residency Program. Pastor Mark Niethammer leads a regular Core Seminar course which consists of formative readings and discussions and sermon reviews. The topics include pastoral formation, leadership, shaping communities, creating a culture of generosity, personnel and human resources, and excellence in ministry.

Resident pastors receive intentional guidance, support, and insight from all members of the pastoral staff. Discussions center around topics like preaching, teaching, counseling, pastoral care, and leadership. Thought provoking readings are discussed; challenging situations and best practices are shared. Pastoral residents gain great insight into the pastoral life from these focused discussions and shared experiences.

Fostering a Balanced and Inclusive Ministry

St. Paul prioritizes a positive work/life balance for all our pastoral staff, recognizing that the health and well-being of our leaders directly impact their ability to serve effectively. We believe that a balanced life is foundational to effective ministry and long-term success in serving God's people.

We value people of every racial identity, ethnicity, citizenship, age, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity — yes, everybody. We celebrate diversity as a gift from God. Inclusivity enriches our congregation as we become a more vibrant reflection of the larger community.

Application Information

After consulting with their bishop of candidacy, seminary students in their final year or graduates awaiting their first call are eligible to apply for the program.

Candidates interview for a two-year (non-renewable) call. Each pastor receives a salary and benefits package at or above synod guidelines. All residency program books and materials relevant to the program will be provided. Living expenses and housing are the responsibility of the resident pastors.

St. Paul works closely with the pastors and ELCA bishops to ensure ordination and second call placement. Second call discernment occurs during the final six months of the two-year residency.

LEADERSHIP



Mark Niethammer, *senior pastor*

Pastor Mark assumes the lead mentoring responsibility. A spirit of collegiality, integrity, and visionary leadership mark his ministry.

A native of Wyoming, Mark earned his undergraduate degree from St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., and his Master of Divinity from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn. While his ordained ministry has spanned nearly 15 years in a variety of roles, before making his way to St. Paul, Mark served St. Olaf Lutheran Church in Austin, Minn., first as associate pastor and then as lead pastor.

Pam Garrett, *program administrator*

Pam oversees the complete program and works closely with the resident pastors to provide a truly rewarding experience.

Other St. Paul program staff and pastors work closely and collegially with the resident pastors.



The setting of St. Paul Lutheran Church

St. Paul is an active 3,500-member congregation, located in Davenport, Iowa. We are a central city church but draw members from a broad geographical area. Known for radical hospitality, youth programs, music, Christian education, and our broad mission support, this is a rich learning environment for pastoral residents.

Congregational context

Ministries support affordable housing projects, an urban garden, mental health and wellness programs, and local and national mission projects. An onsite preschool brings the joyful sounds of children's voices to the church campus each weekday morning. There are opportunities to connect, to learn and of course, to worship. St. Paul is a welcoming and active community of faith.

About the Quad Cities

The Quad Cities, nestled along the Mississippi River, offers an exciting blend of unique experiences, outdoor adventures, and family-friendly fun. With a rich arts culture, numerous festivals, and farmer's markets, there's always something new to discover. Whether you're checking out the many parks and trails, exploring the Figge Art Museum's galleries, watching a baseball game along the river, or enjoying live music in a laid-back atmosphere, there's something for everyone in any stage of life. It's fun, affordable, and unexpectedly expansive.

AT A GLANCE

- The 750-seat sanctuary boasts lovely architecture and state-of-the-art technology
- Mission commitments run deep, with 20%+ of its annual budget devoted to external mission.
- A church and preschool staff of 50+ people
- A regionally-acclaimed music program
- Vibrant kids and youth ministries



I didn't want to be a student anymore — I wanted to be a pastor. The congregation fully embraced the ministry we did together and the gifts I brought. I gained new pastoral ears and eyes with a renewed pastoral heart to pursue excellence in ministry.

— MATTHEW POOCK
Pastor, St. John's Lutheran Church, Evansville, WI



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the purpose of this residency program?

A: The goal is to capitalize on learning and leadership opportunities not available in most first call settings. By continuing the joy of theological inquiry so readily available in seminary, and pairing that spirit with on-the-ground experiences that nurture one's pastoral imagination and leadership instincts, this program is geared towards those who are passionate about leading healthy congregations.

Q: What is the difference between internship and pastoral residency?

A: Much like a physician in residency, honing skills after completing medical school, the ideal St. Paul resident is eager to grow leadership skills, professional instinct, and wise pastoral judgment. The pastors in residency assume full responsibilities that accompany any other first call. These pastors deepen their pastoral identity and leadership practices in a vibrant multi-staff setting.

Q: What makes the St. Paul setting special?

A: St. Paul has grown to become a nationally recognized teaching congregation. Resident pastors cultivate significant character traits and form deep values. Mentoring is prized. Feedback is thoughtfully shared. They become leaders in their own right on the staff team and are fully embraced by the congregation.



*You will work hard,
be pushed intellectually
and spiritually, but it is a
gift from God.*

— ELIZABETH HILLER
Senior pastor,
Dilworth Lutheran Church, Dilworth, MN

HOW TO APPLY

1 Schedule an appointment

Schedule an informational session with program personnel. Contact Pam Garrett, program administrator:

Email: pam@stpaulqc.org

Phone: 563.326.3547

2 Bishop of Candidacy

Contact one's "bishop of candidacy" to discuss interest in applying for this program.

3 Submit an application

Submit a letter of interest, resumé, and program application (stpaulqc.org/application-process) to Pam Garrett, program administrator.



Apply today!

For more information, contact:

Pam Garrett, *program administrator*

pam@stpaulqc.org

Mark Niethammer, *senior pastor*

mark@stpaulqc.org



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2136 Brady Street | Davenport, Iowa | 563.326.3547 | stpaulqc.org