

# SPECIALIZED PASTORAL MINISTRY (SPM) TERMINOLOGY

*(Some of the terms defined in this Glossary of Terms are quotes from the organizations that are referenced. The organizations are independently operated and not officially endorsed by the LCMS. Thus, these organizations' self-descriptions also are not endorsed by the LCMS.)*

**ACPE** – the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc. (ACPE) describes itself as “the premier, Department of Education-recognized organization that provides the highest quality CPE programs for spiritual care professionals of any faith and in any setting. We do this through a rigorous accreditation and certification process for centers and educators that provide CPE. The depth of our training enables students to realize their full potential to strengthen the spiritual health of people in their care as well as themselves.”

**ACPE Certified Educator** (*previously referred to as a CPE supervisor*) – one who is certified to teach and supervise clinical pastoral education students.

**APC** – Association of Professional Chaplains (APC) states, “With commitment to interfaith ministry and the professional practice of chaplaincy care, the Association of Professional Chaplains® serves chaplains in all types of health and human service settings. Our more than 5,000 member chaplains and affiliates are involved in chaplaincy care of all persons, respecting their diverse cultures, identities, abilities and beliefs. As a national, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) professional association, APC® advocates for quality chaplaincy care of all persons in health care facilities, correctional institutions, long-term care units, rehabilitation centers, hospice, the military and other specialized settings.”

**AAPC** – American Association of Pastoral Counselors states it “helps to bring healing, hope and wholeness that enhances the well-being of individuals, families and communities by helping our members provide spiritually informed and integrated counseling through collaborative, community-based services. AAPC provides professional development, community connections and other services to help grow the profession and improve the practice of pastoral counseling.”

**Care of Souls** – the German word “Seelsorge” is translated “care (or cure) of souls.” “Soul” may be understood as the essence or core of one’s God-created being. One’s essential self or soul includes the questions and answers to life’s existential challenges:

e.g., What is my life about? What is the meaning of life? What worth or value do I have? Do I matter? etc. When one is troubled by life, his/her soul (one’s essential or core self) is troubled or wounded. Care of souls is thus the Spirit-led, skilled ministry given to those who are troubled by what is going on in life.

**Certification** – the ability to meet established standards in order to be authorized as a board-certified chaplain, clinical educator, pastoral counselor, etc.

**Core Standards** (*referenced in the endorsement manual*) – basic requirements for SPM ecclesiastical endorsement by the LCMS. The core standards are rostering, congregational service, educational preparation, professional certification or credentialing, required written materials and ministerial and theological competence. The core standards are described in the SPM Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual linked at [lcms.org/spm](http://lcms.org/spm).

**Code of Ethics** – all chaplains are expected to demonstrate behavior consistent with the mission and values of the LCMS. A chaplain is committed to treating all those whom they serve with respect for their personal dignity and right to privacy and to protecting the confidentiality of all personal information shared with the chaplain or pastoral counselor. Confidentiality is to be maintained within the limits of the law. The chaplain is NOT held to confidentiality in the event of current child abuse or neglect, intended suicide/homicide, the threat of bodily injury to self or danger to others. Within the LCMS, those ecclesiastically endorsed to serve in Specialized Pastoral Ministry have made a commitment to be familiar with and abide by the SPM Code of Ethics (located at [lcms.org/spm](http://lcms.org/spm)).

**Chaplain** – an ordained or commissioned minister who receives training to serve the spiritual and emotional needs of those in an RSO or secular institution such as a hospital, prison, military unit, school, police department, fire department, workplace, etc.

**Characteristics of a Specialized Pastoral Minister** – see Traits.

**Clinical Method of Learning** – an educational model that uses data from the actual practice of ministry as the content for reflection and learning.

**Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)** – (clinical education, clinical pastoral learning) – a method of learning ministry by means of functioning as a minister under close supervision. It is a process model of education, predicated on students' individual needs and goals that are compatible with program objectives.

**Common Qualifications and Competencies** – the qualifications and competencies needed to become professionally certified, as recognized by five nationally recognized professional pastoral care/counseling organizations.

**CPE Supervisor** – sometimes referred to as a clinical pastoral educator, the CPE supervisor is the one trained and certified by a professional organization to offer an accredited CPE program and provide individual and group supervision of ministry.

**College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy** – the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy (CPSP) states that it is “a theologically based covenant community, dedicated to ‘Recovery of Soul.’” CPSP notes they offer the following:

- Accredited training and credentialing for Pastoral Psychotherapy. Credential is certification as Diplomate in Pastoral Psychotherapy.
- Accredited training and credentialing for Pastoral Supervision. Credential is certification as Diplomate in Pastoral Supervision.
- Accredited training and credentialing for Pastoral Counseling. Credential is certification as Pastoral Counselor or Associate Pastoral Counselor.
- Accredited training and credentialing for Clinical Chaplaincy. Credential is certification as Board Certified Clinical Chaplain or Board Certified Associate Clinical Chaplain.

**Competency** – in pastoral care and/or counseling is determined by the degree to which a person's theology, necessary skill set, essential knowledge and personality are complementary (integrated).

**Commissioned LCMS Minister as Chaplain** – a chaplain is one who is recognized by an institution or agency as a spiritual caregiver. That person is the one who ministers to those in need on behalf of the Church and speaks with the authority of the Word of God, while at the same time respects the individual beliefs and practices of those who are being served. As such, commissioned ministers (deaconesses,

certified lay ministers, etc.) can serve in the role of institutional or agency chaplain. The institution — RSO or secular — may or may not give the commissioned minister the title of “chaplain.” But if the title is given, the title may be claimed.

**Disaster Response Chaplaincy (DRC)** – LCMS Disaster Response Chaplaincy is a congregation-based model. The purpose is to provide support and resources to the local congregation and its ministers as they provide mercy to its members and community. Disaster Response Chaplains are LCMS ecclesiastically endorsed Emergency Services Chaplains (ESC) and other endorsed specialized pastoral ministers who have received additional training, have agreed to serve and have received approval from the Office of Specialized Pastoral Ministry.

**Emergency Services Chaplain (ESC)** – ESC Chaplains bring comfort and consolation to all persons in need with special emphasis on those confronted with fire, death, accidents or natural and human-caused disasters. The ministry includes the provision of spiritual care to members of law enforcement, fire services and other emergency agencies. ESC Chaplains also provide guidance and counseling, survivor support and ministry in the schools as needed. They may also assist individuals by referring them to other care providers or agencies.

**Endorsement** – the recognition by the LCMS that a rostered person has met LCMS SPM standards for theological and ministerial competence to serve in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling and/or clinical pastoral education. It attests to the church body's assessment that an individual possesses the suitability, readiness, competence and aptitude to serve as its representative in a specialized ministry. Such LCMS ecclesiastical endorsement also signifies good standing on the church's roster of ordained, commissioned and consecrated ministers, and as such is subject to the ecclesiastical authority of the church body.

**Pastoral/Spiritual Care** – a functional designation describing a way of interacting with people and attending to their emotional and spiritual needs using an acquired set of skills and competencies. Within the framework of LCMS SPM, the term “pastoral care” is not intended to signify a title or office of ministry. In such context, the term “pastoral/spiritual care” also acknowledges the need to bridge the gap between the pain or struggles of the individual and the God of grace and hope.

**Pastoral/Spiritual Counseling** – pastoral (spiritual) counseling is a ministry conducted by an authorized representative of the church who establishes a professional therapeutic role using both psychological and theological frames of reference to observe, understand, interpret and foster healing and wholeness in the process. There is a dual nature to the pastoral/spiritual counselor's role: identity and expertise. The pastoral/spiritual counselor participates fully in a pastoral/theological as well as a counseling/ psychological process. As such, a pastoral/spiritual counselor must be dually credentialed, both by the church body as a rostered minister and by a professional organization or a government board recognized for certifying competence in counseling.

**Peer Review** – the evaluation and consultation of work by one or more people of similar competence to that of the peer. It is a form of self-regulation by qualified members of a profession within the relevant field. Peer review methods are employed to maintain standards of quality, improve performance and provide credibility. Among those who are SPM-endorsed, peer review is a biannual requirement.

**Religious Pluralism** – the recognition of and respect for religious diversity without sacrificing one's own spirituality and religious identity and beliefs.

**Rostered** – a Minister of the Gospel — ordained or commissioned — who is a member in good standing on the roster of the LCMS. See Bylaws of the LCMS, 2.6 and 2.7.

**Specialization/Specialty** – within the LCMS and Specialized Pastoral Ministry (SPM), specialization refers to four main vocations: Clinical Pastoral Educators, Emergency Services Chaplains, Institutional Chaplains, and Pastoral/Spiritual Counselors. Within each of those specializations, there are sub-specialties.

**Spiritual** – God breathed spirit or life-giving breath into the first humans (Gen. 2:7). Thus, spirit is the human life miraculously given by God, and spiritual is everything in life that is associated with God's relationship to persons and a person's relationship (or lack thereof) to God. More broadly, spiritual relates to religion or religious beliefs and/or that which affects the human spirit or soul as opposed to that which relates to material or physical matter.

**Traits** – this is a partial list of traits that are desirable and helpful for someone serving in SPM:

1. Willing to serve in a non-parish ministry
2. When considering various ministerial duties, would find pastoral/diaconal care visits or counseling most rewarding
3. Ability to work in a pluralistic context while maintaining a strong Lutheran identity
4. Capacity to work without contextual or confessional LCMS support
5. Can minister effectively among people of all races, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, etc.
6. Attends to self-assessment and self-awareness
7. Finds that others talk with you about deep, personal matters
8. Values and nurtures emotional intelligence
9. Can readily engage in crisis or emergency ministry
10. Does not need to be the primary person in charge; can work for a secular boss

