



Your Guide to Mentoring

FUTURE CHURCH WORKERS

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PAUL AND TIMOTHY

is a great example of Christian mentoring. Paul's lifelong mentorship, which began when Timothy was very young, helped Timothy learn to serve as a faithful pastor.

CURRENT LCMS PASTORS AND CHURCH WORKERS IDENTIFIED

encouragement from adults at church as one of the most important factors that influenced them to pursue their church work vocation.

Pastors, parents, teachers, youth leaders, lay leaders and other influential adults are all important in encouraging youth to explore church work vocations. With the permission of the young person's parents or guardians, a mentor can play a special role in helping him or her explore church work.

Youth tend to begin seriously considering their future vocations as they enter seventh grade. This consideration becomes more serious and specific through their high school years. Therefore, mentors can play a significant role in helping young people in middle school and high school consider a church work vocation.

Mentors are trusted adults that support and encourage young people as they grow and consider their future vocations. Mentors encourage the mentee to understand their primary vocation as a baptized child of God, forgiven in Christ. Mentors then help their mentee to consider future vocations, including church work or other vocations, as ways God calls people to love Him and serve their neighbor.

Parents are expected to be involved throughout the mentorship as well and should give their permission for their child to participate.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MENTOR

Mentorship can be formal or informal. In some situations, a mentor may be assigned to a youth. In other cases, mentorship can develop from an informal relationship with a young person through interactions at church, through shared interests, or because the mentor serves in a vocation the young person admires.

Mentorship works best when the mentor listens to the mentee's questions, aspirations, areas of interest and goals, and then provides guidance and support in accordance with God's Word.



SET APART TO SERVE
LCMS CHURCH WORK RECRUITMENT



Set Apart to Serve (SAS), a major initiative of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), seeks to create an intentional culture of church worker formation and recruitment in every LCMS congregation, school and entity. SAS supports adults as they encourage youth to live a life in the Word of God and to consider serving in a full-time church work vocation. Visit lcms.org/sas to learn more. Contact us at SetApart2Serve@lcms.org with any questions or comments.

MENTORSHIP GUIDELINES

— Building a strong relationship —



SHARED PRIMARY VOCATION

Attending church together is the most important aspect of the mentor's role. The shared primary vocation of faith in Christ Jesus directs the conversations and relationship between the mentor and the mentee. Therefore, discussion of the Scripture readings from Sunday worship and even the pastor's sermon should be an essential part of mentorship. Meetings should include prayer and Scripture readings. The mentor may pray the Collect prayer from the Divine Service or pray *ex corde*.



TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION

Active listening shows that a mentor cares about their mentee's development and will help the mentor provide guidance. Examples of active listening include:

- **Listening when the mentee is talking:** Active listening begins by actually listening to and taking seriously what your mentee is saying. Instead of focusing on your response, try to fully understand what is being said.
- **Asking open-ended questions:** These are questions that start with "Why?" "How?" and "What?" For example, "What is one way your faith will impact your future vocation?"
- **Showing empathy:** After listening to the mentee, respond to their thoughts or find ways to relate to what they are saying.
- **Summarizing what is heard:** This helps the mentee know that the mentor is listening, and also allows the mentee to clarify their thoughts if the mentor misunderstands. For example, "I heard you say..."

Likewise, mentees must communicate with their mentor. Encourage your mentee to come to you with questions and topics they want to discuss. Encourage them to share what is going on in their life and what they have thought about between meetings. Make sure you model the importance of faith in these conversations.

Remind them that open communication helps both of you in this process.



COMMITMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Regular communication is critical in a mentorship. Both mentors and mentees should agree on the frequency of meetings (e.g. monthly, quarterly, etc.) and commit to regular in-person meetings, along with check-ins via phone, text or email.

To help foster trust and accountability, in-person meetings should last between 30 minutes and an hour. Each meeting should have an agenda to guide the discussion. A sample agenda has been provided at the end of this resource.

Establishing a mentorship agreement and keeping a journal are ways to set goals, create accountability and gain the full benefit of mentorship. Sample agreements and questions for journaling can be found at the end of this resource.

Visit lcms.org/set-apart-to-serve

Click on the videos and resources to learn about church work vocations and how we can encourage our children and friends to serve the Lord full-time in His church. For questions or comments, contact SetApart2Serve@lcms.org.

SAMPLE MENTORSHIP AGREEMENT

*Mutual commitment and accountability are essential to productive mentorship.
The following sample mentorship agreement is a great place to start during your first meeting.*

SAMPLE SET APART TO SERVE MENTORSHIP AGREEMENT

+ FOR THE MENTEE:

These are the things I would like to discuss:

I WILL:

- **See** you in church each week;
- **Share** what I learn, including successes and struggles;
- **Set** goals for exploring church work vocations <or insert special vocation>;
- **Accept** suggestions and feedback with humility;
- **Share** candid feedback with my mentor;
- **Show** appreciation for my mentor; and
- **Invite** my parents and pastor to be part of our ongoing conversation.

+ FOR THE MENTOR:

These are some important things I would like to share with you:

I WILL:

- **See** you in church each week;
- **Pray** for you;
- **Listen** carefully as you discuss your thoughts on future vocations;
- **Share** my own reflections, stories and lessons as a baptized child of God who has and continues to learn to serve God through my vocations;
- **Maintain** confidentiality, except where your safety is at risk; and
- **Invite** your parents and pastor to be part of our ongoing conversation.

+ FOR BOTH:

We will meet on the following schedule and reevaluate on a quarterly basis:

+ SIGNATURES:

Mentee/Date: _____

Mentor/Date: _____

Parent/Date: _____

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR JOURNALING

Journaling may provide a valuable tool for reflection and organizing thoughts/questions.

Keeping a mentorship journal will help both of you formulate questions and determine the next steps to pursue.

SAMPLE TOPICS FOR REFLECTION AND JOURNALING

Both mentor and mentee can use these prompts to prepare for their meeting, and note any major takeaways, challenges faced and lessons learned.

DEFINE what goals the mentee has for this meeting.

- What would you like to discuss?
- What questions do you have about possible future vocations?
- What questions do you have about your current vocations?
- Do you have thoughts and ideas to express—without expectation for answers or solutions today?

SHARE how your vocation as baptized child of God affects your everyday life at school, church, home, or work.

- How important is your faith in your daily life?
- What questions do you have about what the church believes and teaches?
- Identify people you know whom you would like to emulate. Is there a way to talk to them about the role their faith plays in their daily vocation?

REFLECT on how the meeting went afterwards. Use the following prompts to guide your journaling:

- Were your goals for today's meeting met?
- What new or unexpected thoughts or ideas emerged?
- For the mentee: What do you hope to accomplish or experience between now and the next meeting?
- For the mentor: How can you adjust or reinforce your guidance?

LOOKING FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT?

Set Apart to Serve resources can help you facilitate conversations with young people about church work vocations. Find ideas for conversation starters with the [*Catechism Conversation Guide for Ages 12-14*](#) and the [*Post Catechism Conversation Guide for Ages 14-18+*](#).

SAMPLE MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

→ **Begin** with prayer and a Scripture reading.

→ **Discuss** successes or struggles since the last meeting.

→ **Review** journal entries (only what the mentee feels comfortable sharing).

→ **Are there goals that need to be established** to help continue toward a specific vocational path?

For example, does the mentor know anyone who can help provide experiences of different vocations the mentee is interested in?

→ **Talk** about goals for the next month.

→ **Close** with the Lord's Prayer.