

I. Definition of DCE Ministry and DCE Expectations

A. *DCE Definition, Mission, and Key Values*

1. The DCE Defined

a) MINISTER OF RELIGION, COMMISSIONED -

(1) Graduated from a synodical college following a synodically prescribed course of study (or colloquy)

(2) Certified for ministry by the college faculty

(3) Commissioned upon acceptance of a call issued through the synodical Board of Assignments.

b) Both male and female DCEs should be called into ministry by the same process. Both male and female teachers should be called into ministry using the same official call documents. No differentiation between teachers should be made on the basis of gender, i.e., they should receive equal pay and benefits for equal work.

c) Only synodically certified Ministers of Religion Commissioned are eligible to receive calls. They must be on the official active or candidate Minister of Religion roster of the Synod, or have completed an approved course of study and internship and eligible for placement, to be eligible for a call. DCE's whose candidacy has lapsed, for whatever reason, are not eligible to receive a call. They are, however, encouraged to apply for reinstatement to the roster by writing to the president of the District in which they last served. He will forward application information and advice candidates of next steps to be taken.

d) Workers who are not synodically trained and have never been synodically certified are not eligible to receive a call. Congregations which intend to employ such workers are not to use official synodical call documents. Contract documents are available from Concordia Publishing House. For access to call documents through Concordia Publishing House call School Ministries at 949-854-3232.

2. DCE Code of Ethics (Per the 1999 National DCE Summit)
<http://www.psd youth.net/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=VOFZxBJaY4%3d&tabid=144&mid=719>

B. Roles a DCE could have in the congregation

1. A DCE may be assigned tasks related to one or more of these areas of ministry. It is the congregation's responsibility to determine its needs before extending a call. Usually, the DCE reports to the pastor and is a part of the congregation's ministry team.

- a) Children's Ministries: Sunday school, VBS, weekday programs, cradle roll
- b) Youth Ministries: Jr. High, High school, young adults/college age, confirmation instruction
- c) Family Ministries: Family events, parenting support, MOPS
- d) Adult Education: Plan and/or lead Bible studies; train and support leaders, coordinate programming
- e) Small groups: Bible studies, in-home groups, training leaders
- f) Human Care: Stephen Ministries, service trips, community service
- g) Music (if individual has skills): teach music, lead music in worship

C. Expectations for the DCE

1. Solid education and training

- a) At Concordia University, Irvine, DCE Program classes and experiences are designed to equip the student in four roles and their associated skills essential for anyone moving into an entry level position as a Director of Christian Education: Ministry Leader, Christian Educator, Life Span Minister, and Care Minister.

(1) Ministry Leader

- (a) Spiritual Life
- (b) Multi-staff Ministry

- (c) Professionalism
- (d) Leadership
- (e) Administration
- (2) *Christian Educator*
 - (a) Scripture Competency
 - (b) Educational Resource
 - (c) Effectively Teaches
- (3) *Life Span Minister*
 - (a) Intergenerational Awareness
 - (b) Cultural Awareness
 - (c) Youth & Family Focus
 - (d) Children & Family Focus
- (4) *Care Minister*
 - (a) Community Building
 - (b) Special Needs Ministry
 - (c) Listening Skills
 - (d) Conflict Resolution
 - (e) Crisis Management
 - (f) Agency Resource Competency
- b) Roles and Skills of DCE Ministry as found in DCE Courses
 - (1) *To prepare students for Ministry Leadership*
 - (a) Introduction to DCE Ministry
 - (b) Parish Program Leadership
 - (c) Group Dynamics
 - (d) Introduction to Ministry
 - (e) Church Polity and Organizational Structure
 - (f) The Role of the Christian Professional
 - (g) Fieldwork I & II
 - (h) Internship (5th Year)
 - (2) *To prepare students as Christian Educators*

- (a) History and Literature of the Old & New Testaments
- (b) Christian Doctrine I & II
- (c) Christian Witness and Evangelism
- (d) Corporate Worship
- (e) History of the Christian Church
- (f) Contemporary Religious Bodies in America
- (g) Biblical Theology and Exegesis
- (h) The Mission of Christ's Church
- (i) Old or New Testament Book of the Bible
- (j) Teaching Strategies and Management
- (k) Teaching the Faith

(3) *To prepare students as Lifespan Ministers*

- (a) Children's Ministry
- (b) Youth Ministry
- (c) Adult Ministry
- (d) Family Ministry

(4) *To prepare students as Care Ministers*

- (a) Principles of Counseling
- (b) CCI Class in Care Ministry

Please note that the preceding courses are offered by Concordia University, Irvine, and may not be offered in the other DCE Programs at the other Concordia's. However, DCE coursework and requirements across the six DCE Programs remain quite similar, thus one can presume comparable education from the other Concordia Universities.

2. Healthy Ministry Practices

- a) God calls into His service ministry leaders with a passion for service. University DCE Programs are stressing that DCE's not only

exhibit exemplary dedication to Christ through their service in the local congregation, but that they seek to avoid burnout by engaging in personal practices meant to maintain personal, family, and spiritual health and well-being.

(1) It is not uncommon for DCE's to reach a point of burnout between 18 months and 3 years in a given call. Many congregations and DCE's fail to establish healthy practices in ministry leaving too many DCE's resigning their calls and ministry prematurely.

(2) In order to develop practices that promote health and maintain boundaries in ministry DCE's should be encouraged to keep regular days off, as well as scheduling regular opportunities for personal "Sabbath" time. Further DCE's should be encouraged to seek ways to gather refreshed through the practice of corporate worship within their congregation, allowing their worship of our Lord Jesus Christ to remain spiritually renewing and restorative.

3. Networking and Connecting

a) Just as pastors gather in their circuits for mutual encouragement and support, DCE's tend to have a deep desire to gather together with others who understand the unique challenges and joys of ministry as a DCE. Thus our district encourages local clusters to meet regularly as well as offers annual conferences and encourages participation in synod wide gatherings such as the National NADCE Conference.

b) DCE's Etc. is the district's official professional association for DCE's and others in youth, family, and Christian education ministry. DCE's Etc. coordinates monthly cluster meetings across the district with groups in Los Angeles, Orange County, Phoenix, Las Vegas, the Inland Empire, and San Diego.

c) National Association of Directors of Christian Education (NADCE) is the official national professional association for DCE's. NADCE focuses on advocacy, resources, and professional connections for DCE's.

4. Inreach and Outreach

a) Matthew 28:19 – “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” Whether this is expressed locally or globally DCE's have a passion for seeing children, youth, and families connected to Christ and saving faith in Him.

5. Unique Skills and Personality

a) Though all DCE's have similar training, they each possess their own unique God-given talents. Some may be gifted musicians, others gifted teachers, while still others gifted administrators. Additionally not all DCE's have the same personality traits. Many are extroverts, while others are introverts. Many are intuitive, while others prefer sensing. Many are feelers, while others are thinkers. Many are perceivers, while others are judges. (See Myers-Briggs for details on these dichotomies.) Most DCE's are some combination of skills and personality types forming a unique servant for Christ's kingdom.

6. Congregational Equipping and Resourcing

a) DCE's are taught how to function in ministry as an equipper and resourcing specialist in their congregations. As equippers they seek to provide training and support for lay volunteers to better partner with them in the educational and other ministries of the local church. As resourcing specialists they seek to provide material support for those in service and ministry in the church as well for people across the life-span for their walk with Christ and development of their faith.

D. Expectations of the Congregation

1. Support of DCE attendance at District and local DCE gatherings and conferences (See I.C.3)
2. Adherence to the District Salary Guidelines. Please read more about this under “The DCE Call Process” and “How does a congregation begin the Call process?” further on in this document. Please refer to Appendix A for District Salary Guidelines.
3. Communication regarding important personnel changes. Please keep district staff informed of changes in staffing so that we can best support and assist your congregation in ministry.