



## *Pastors with Alternate Training*

This print resource accompanies a [video explanation](#), deepening synod's understanding of the Pastor with Alternate Training (PAT) program: who it is for, what it provides, and how it is distinct. By explaining 'what makes a pastor a pastor', it underscores the integrity of the program.

### **What Makes a Pastor a Pastor?**

To answer this, we must ask, "*What is a pastor?*"

A pastor is a man sent by God, through the Church,

- to proclaim the grace of God in Christ Jesus to sinners
- and to administer the sacraments,

so that sinners might repent, believe the Gospel, and be saved.

### **So, what makes a pastor a pastor?**

1. A proven character (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-8; Acts 6:3),
2. training (learned) and formation (the mind of Christ, 1 Cor 2:16; John 15:15) in the Word of the Lord (Acts 6:3),
3. the ability to teach that Word (1 Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:9),
4. and the sending to teach that Word (Rom. 10:15; John 20:21; Matt. 28:18-20; Tit. 1:5; 1 Tim. 5:22; 2 Tim. 1:6, etc.).

### **What is a Pastor with Alternate Training?**

The following chart shows that a PAT trained pastor is a pastor. And that the training and program has the integrity we require. The differences between the two are the methods used to provide the training.

Regular Seminary Training	PAT Training
<b>Proven Character</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• congregation members and other Christians encourage a man to consider being a pastor</li> <li>• personal &amp; pastoral references are provided to the seminary</li> <li>• a bachelor's degree beforehand to prove ability to do the academic work at the level required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PAT site identifies the man</li> <li>• personal &amp; Pastoral references are provided to the Regional Pastor upon application</li> <li>• evidence of ability to study at the level required</li> </ul>
<b>Training in God's Word</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrated knowledge of God's Word</li> <li>• studying Confessions &amp; memorizing Catechism</li> <li>• studying Biblical doctrine</li> <li>• studying books of the Bible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrated knowledge of God's Word</li> <li>• studying Confessions &amp; memorizing Catechism</li> <li>• studying Biblical doctrine</li> <li>• studying Books of the Bible</li> </ul>
<b>Formation in God's Word</b> ( <i>the mind of Christ</i> )	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• immersion in the life of the seminary, especially the daily chapel services</li> <li>• class lectures, &amp; discussions with classmates &amp; professors</li> <li>• field work in local congregations</li> <li>• 1-year full time vicarage under a mentor pastor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• immersion in the life of the congregation</li> <li>• classes, interactions with PAT cohort</li> <li>• ongoing service and training in PAT site throughout time</li> </ul>
<b>Ability to Teach</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrated, practiced, and overseen by pastors during classes, fieldwork, and vicarage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrated, practiced, &amp; overseen by pastors during classes, and in PAT site</li> </ul>
<b>Sending</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• first call/placement, ordination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• placement/call as pastor of PAT site, ordination</li> </ul>

**What are the key differences?**

Regular Seminary Training	PAT Training
<b>Length of Program</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 years, 3 years of FT studies, 1 FT year of Vicarage (internship)</li> <li>• 30 courses, plus field work, &amp; vicarage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 years (or longer)</li> <li>• 20 courses, plus ongoing fieldwork under a seminary trained mentor pastor throughout the whole time</li> </ul>

<b>Residency</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the seminary, emersed in the prayer and study life of the seminary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the parish, emersed in the life of the parish</li> </ul>
<b>Intensity</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intensity of scriptural study and formation</li> <li>• Provides more in depth doctrinal and practical training</li> <li>• The younger age of students requires this intensity of formation as they may not have as many years of character formation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intensity of part-time study <i>while also</i> working and continuing to serve their PAT site</li> <li>• Shows incredible commitment and integrity</li> <li>• The older age of students, and the site themselves encouraging, supporting, and putting forward the candidate vets them for integrity of character</li> </ul>
<b>Classmates</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• those in his year at seminary, and others ahead or behind him in the program</li> <li>• these men often become close colleagues or “brothers in arms” throughout the rest of their ministry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrated, practiced, &amp; overseen by pastors during classes, and in PAT site</li> <li>• PAT is now being conducted by cohorts with online classes, and hopefully a couple of in person courses; this provides the men in the program to develop fellow colleagues or “brothers in arms” lessening their isolation</li> </ul>
<b>Mentoring</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primarily through seminary and vicarage</li> <li>• Not expected after ordination (but plans are in place to provide mentoring for new pastors as part of an ongoing professional development expectation for pastors)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By a mentor pastor throughout the program</li> <li>• By a mentor pastor after ordination, especially if theological or practical issues come up that a greater depth of theological study might assist with</li> </ul>

**What is the purpose of PAT?**

PAT was established by Lutheran Church-Canada in convention in 2002. Its purposes were twofold:

- a congregation or mission opportunity in a **remote place** (not near enough to other congregations to partner with them)
- a congregation or mission opportunity where for **cultural or linguistic** reasons cannot be served by an LCC pastor

Together with this and financial or economic conditions that do not allow for the provision of essential pastoral services.

This means a PAT trained pastor:

- will *rarely serve full-time* as a pastor.
- is a pastor *of his site* (site-specific).
  - He will not normally be able to accept a call to another site without:
    - further study, or
    - the recognition of his specific gifts and consent of the President's Ministry Council.

The PAT program is intended to be a *short-term* solution to a *current* challenge. It is not meant to be a long-term solution.

This means that regular seminary training is the *gold standard* of training for our pastors. But PAT is a helpful training pathway to provide Word and Sacrament ministry in challenging circumstances.

### **Is PAT for me or my congregation?**

PAT is not designed for the man who wants to be a pastor, but rather for the congregation in need of a pastor. So, the question is: does your congregation or group meet the criteria for PAT? If so, then please speak to your Regional Pastor and explore if this is a way to provide the life-giving Word of Jesus & His sacraments for establishing and sustaining the kingdom of God in your midst.

### **What should I do if I want to be a pastor?**

If you are a man who feels led to become a pastor, then speak to LCC pastors you know, or reach out to our seminaries. If you wish to serve full-time as a pastor, then seminary training is the route for you.

If you have further questions, you may send them to [here](#).