

Initial Observations and Comments

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What is your current setting?

- While healthcare continues to reflect the largest proportion of SPC settings, long-term care is not far behind. (Note: The rate of ecclesiastical endorsement is lowest among long-term care chaplains.)
- Nationally, some of the fastest growing specializations are hospice and police ministries, a low proportion of SPC ministries in the ELCA.
- What trends and implications might we discern for ELCA SPC? How do we strategize? What are the implications for growing new ministries, adding specializations, recruitment, etc.?

What is your role in SPC ministry?

- Clearly, the Chaplain identity still predominates. We see an interesting parallel of counselors and administrators at 20% each. A surprise? Are administrative roles growing?
- CPE supervisors now only 10% of total, reflecting continued serious decline in numbers since 1988 (loss of more than half). Lutherans were once at forefront of CPE movement. What's going on? Where do we go from here?

What affiliation is your current setting?

- 35% in ELCA-affiliated organization - - is this surprising?
- Only 10% in government-related. What does this signal about current/future church-relatedness? Are there strategic issues embedded here?

Is a church affiliation required for your current position?

- Organizations still appear to prefer overt denominational identity. 43% specifically require or prefer ELCA. Seem high? Low? Implications?

Connectedness

- As can be seen, the closer the entity (congregation), the closer the sense of real connectedness - 75% at the parish level. In contrast, this drops to 20% at the churchwide level. What is this saying? What underlying history, issues, etc. contribute to this? What does this mean for the Dept. for SPCCE, Div. for Ministry, churchwide structure, strategy, etc.? What are the implications for Synods?

Gatherings/likeliness to attend.

- Strong desire to meet with Bishop and synod staff: 60%, with 65% likely to attend. Local peer groups and professional associations follow pretty closely. Again, we see indications that a relationship with the churchwide organization is lower.

Synodical structural units and staff persons.

- Only 44% aware of such a unit in their synod. Linked to strong desire for gatherings with Bishop/synod staff? Only 45% aware of a designated synod staff person. What, if anything, needs to happen in light of these numbers?
- What are the implications for synodical SPC representatives and regional representatives, Bishops, etc.?

Priorities for the Director for SPCCE

- “Interpreting/advocating” for SPC persons clearly receives the highest response, with endorsement coordination and networking/communication considerably lower as second and third respectively. Representation at professional associations and fund-raising rate much lower as priorities. Are these figures congruent with the current Director’s workload and priorities?
- What does the high ranking for interpretation say? Can interpretation and advocacy happen in other ways as well? What does all of this mean in terms of realistically balancing a half-time position for directing SPCCE?

Endorsement status

- Impressively, the survey result is within 1-2% of churchwide roster statistics. The large disparity of endorsed/non-endorsed speaks for itself. How important is this to us as church, division, SPC community, professional associations, etc.?
- How do we address and strategize around this issue in ways that are both sensitive and deliberate? (See also following item considering possibility of a new “registered” category.)

In favor of a new “registered” category?

- Responses don’t overwhelmingly point to either favoring or opposing this category, in fact a third of respondents don’t actually have an opinion. The survey seems to show that more constituents are in favor of something being done, but perhaps the creation of a “registered” category isn’t the only option? What are other creative possibilities?
- How is the Inter-Lutheran Task Force on endorsement addressing this, and how can we interface with that process?

Greatest Concerns and Support Needed (comment questions)

- While not quantifiable, these responses call attention to issues of isolation, endorsement, and recruitment, as well as a need for stronger relationships/connections, advocacy, and visibility. These comments beg our attention in light of the larger quantitative findings.