



**Northern Texas–Northern Louisiana Synod
of the ELCA
Parish Lay Mission Academy**

PLM Candidate-Contextual Project Documents

To: Parish Lay Mission Academy Students and their Pastor or another Supervisor

Re: Parish Lay Mission Academy Contextual Project Requirements

Please read through the attached Contextual Project Guide and use the documents to facilitate the Project which is a requirement for being certified as a Parish Lay Minister at graduation. Note that there are three forms to be filled out including the Contextual Project Agreement, First Project Evaluation and Final Project Evaluation.

PLM Frank Swehosky is the PLMA Contextual Project Facilitator and will be monitoring the progress of each student's project. He will be available to give direction, guidance, and answer questions from both the PLMA student and the Pastor/Supervisor.

Note: All original Project documents should be given to the PLMA Registrar and filed in the student's permanent folder. You may give copies of the documents to PLM Swehosky.

PLM Frank Swehosky,
PLMA Contextual Project Facilitator
Hope Lutheran Church
4795 E. Hwy 199
Springtown, TX 7082
(817) 247-8947
DeanPLMA@ntnl.org



NT-NL Synod Parish Lay Mission Academy Contextual Project Guide

The NT-NL Synod Parish Lay Mission Academy (PLMA) was established to assist laypersons to achieve a deeper Christian identity and participation in the mission of the whole Church. The Academy provides training for individuals desiring to assume a greater role of lay leadership in their congregation or other ministry of the synod/mission territory.

In four semesters over a two-year period of time, the Parish Lay Mission Academy prepares congregational lay persons to become synodically authorized Parish Lay Ministers. This preparation includes twelve units of study in the areas of Bible, theology, church history, and parish leadership. Students must successfully complete each semester's work to be certified as a synodically authorized Parish Lay Minister.

In addition to the four-semester classroom work, the PLMA program requires that students desiring to be certified must complete a Contextual Project which usually takes place in their home congregation. A Supervisor from the congregation, usually the Pastor, will work with and monitor the student as they complete their project. Should an alternative site or a non-Pastor Supervisor become necessary or be requested by the student the Parish Lay Mission Academy Committee must approve the alternatives.

The following guide is offered for the PLM candidate and the Supervisor.

1. The PLM Candidate is responsible for contacting his/her Pastor/Supervisor and reviewing these guidelines. While the Pastor/Supervisor has likely endorsed the Candidate, he or she may not be fully aware of the need for the Candidate to complete a Contextual Project. Should a Pastor/Supervisor be unclear of the goals/objectives of the Parish Lay Mission Academy, the Contextual Project or if they have any questions, they should feel free to contact the PLMA Dean, the PLMA Contextual Project Facilitator or the PLMA Registrar.
2. The purpose of the Contextual Project is to provide the PLM Candidate with a congregational experience similar to what they might expect to undertake once they are certified.
3. Recommended time-line for a Contextual Project:
1st Semester: The Candidate and Supervisor/Pastor begin discussion of the possibility of Projects.
Semester break: The Candidate and Supervisor/Pastor agree to a Project, a start date in the 2nd semester and then complete the Agreement document provided. The Candidate can submit the document by mail or bring it the first day of 2nd semester class.
2nd Semester: The Contextual Project begins and toward the end of the semester the First Evaluation is completed and submitted.
3rd Semester: Before or during the semester the Project is completed, the Final Evaluation is completed and submitted.
4. In determining an appropriate Contextual Project, the Candidate and Supervisor/Pastor should evaluate and discuss the gifts for ministry as well as the interests of the Candidate. Consideration should be given to the ministry and life of the congregation. Candidates might consider stretching their skills without moving too far out of their comfort/capability zones.
5. The Candidate and Supervisor/Pastor should schedule times to meet to discuss the project and the progress of the Candidate beyond the First and Final Evaluations.
6. The Candidate and Supervisor/Pastor need to be aware that failure to complete a Contextual Project will keep a Candidate from being certified a Parish Lay Minister, but not necessarily from graduating from the Academy.



PLM Candidate – Supervisor/Pastor Contextual Project Agreement

Date _____

Name of Candidate _____

Name of Supervisor/Pastor _____

Location/Congregation of Project _____

Identify and describe the Contextual Project.

What are the objectives of this Contextual Project?

What is specifically expected of the PLM Candidate during this Contextual Project?

How will the Supervisor/Pastor evaluate that the objectives have been accomplished?

Contextual Project start date: _____

First Evaluation date: _____

Final Evaluation date: _____

Signature: _____
Supervisor/Pastor

Signature: _____
Parish Lay Ministry Candidate

Note: Submit this form to the PLMA Registrar with a copy to the Parish Lay Mission Academy Contextual Project Facilitator. Use back of each form or attach additional pages, if needed.



Supervisor/Pastor Contextual Project Evaluation

First Evaluation

Parish Lay Mission Academy

Date _____

Name of PLM Candidate _____

What progress has the PLM Candidate made towards reaching the stated objectives of this Contextual Project?

What specific parts of the project have been completed by the PLM Candidate?

What specific parts of the project remain to be completed by the PLM Candidate?

Signature: _____
Supervisor/Pastor

Signature: _____
Parish Lay Ministry Candidate

Note: If you plan to do more than a First and Final Evaluation, please copy this form for those evaluations.

Please submit this form to the PLMA Registrar with a copy to the Parish Lay Mission Academy Contextual Project Facilitator. Use back of each form or attach additional pages, if needed.



Supervisor/Pastor Contextual Project Evaluation

Final Evaluation

Parish Lay Mission Academy

Date _____

Name of PLM Candidate _____

Was the PLM Candidate able to satisfactorily complete the objectives of the Contextual Project? (Yes / No)
If No, please identify specific objectives not met and possible reasons that they were not met.

As Supervisor/Pastor of this Contextual Project what would you identify that the PLM Candidate has learned through this Project?

In what, if any ways, has the Contextual Project benefited the congregation?

DO YOU, AS SUPERVISOR/PASTOR, RECOMMEND THE PLM CANDIDATE FOR CERTIFICATION? YES / NO

Signature: _____
Supervisor/Pastor

Signature: _____
Parish Lay Ministry Candidate

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