



SACRED PLAYGROUNDS

This research is generously funded through a Youth and Young Adult Ministry Grant of the ELCA campaign. Research directed by Sacred Playgrounds, LLC.

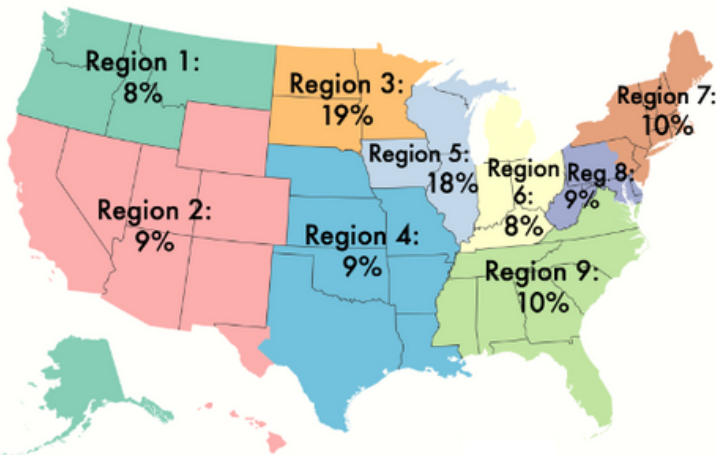


2020 MINISTER SURVEY QUICK FACTS

WHO PARTICIPATED

3,041 rostered ministers from all 65 synods of the ELCA.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION



62% of respondents were ordained with an active call

5% were deacons

33% were retired or on leave

RESPONDENTS WERE

96%

WHITE

42%

FEMALE

5%

LGBTQIA+

! DRAMATICALLY CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

	YEAR ROSTERED:			
	Before 1980	1980-1999	2000-2009	2010-2020
Median age when rostered	26	30	38	37
% retired	86%	29%	13%	4%
% Female	5%	41%	61%	61%
% LGBTQIA+	2%	3%	5%	9%
% BIPOC	1%	3%	5%	7%
Served on LOM summer staff	30%	31%	32%	36%

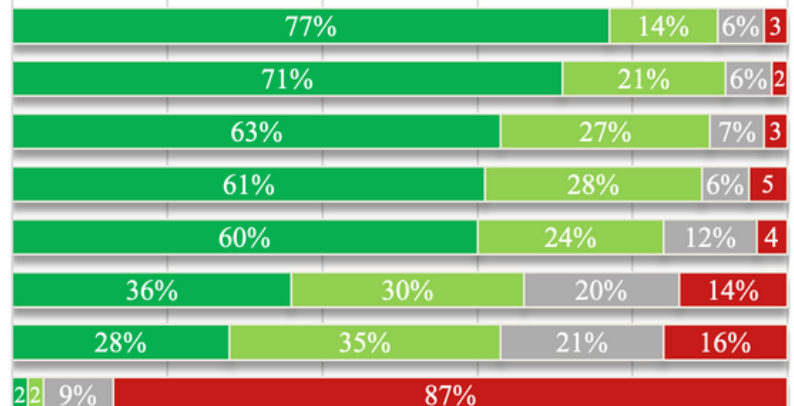
62% grew up ELCA regulars (or predecessor body), attending monthly or more throughout childhood

20% grew up regulars in non-ELCA church

PERCEPTIONS OF THE CLOSEST LUTHERAN OUTDOOR MINISTRY (LOM) SITE

■ Agree strongly
 ■ Agree moderately
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ Disagree

- The camp director is a well-respected partner in ministry
- The camp effectively teaches the Christian faith
- The camp is living up to its mission/purpose
- The site and facilities are high quality and well-maintained
- I feel welcome to participate in the ministries of the camp
- My congregation and the camp are effective partners in ministry
- Our camp is a place where people encounter diversity
- It may be time for the camp to close



MINISTRY EXPERIENCES AND CALL

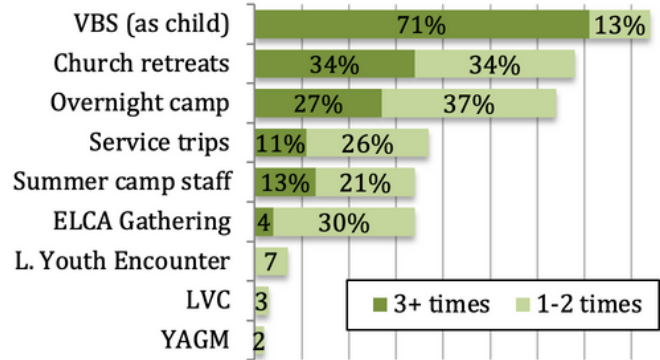
THE BIG 4

Aside from home and congregation, 4 ministry spaces stood out as most significant for call to ministry

- SUNDAY SCHOOL
- CAMP
- THE YOUTH GATHERING
- CAMPUS MINISTRY

- 43%** attended an ELCA college/university
- 37%** were active in LCM/LuMin at non-ELCA schools
- 94%** attended Sunday school monthly+, and over half said it was very/extremely important to their call
- 74%** of those who worked on camp staff said it was very or extremely important to their call to ministry

Frequency of ministry experiences



If a respondent **did one of**: attend camp 4+ times, serve on camp staff, attend ELCA college, attend campus ministry monthly+, or attend the ELCA Gathering, median age when rostered was **29**. If **none** of these, median age was **41**.

ENGAGEMENT WITH OUTDOOR MINISTRY

64% of respondents attended overnight Christian camp at least once as child or youth

40% worked on summer staff at a Christian camp
Of these, **91%** said it had a significant impact on their life, **80%** learned a skill they still use, **20%** met their spouse

- Congregation sponsors youth to attend camp: **62%**
- Minister visits local camp annually or more: **43%**
- Congregation gives annually to LOM camp: **39%**
- Minister gives annually to LOM camp: **35%**
- Requires camp for confirmation students: **26%**

39%

Camp Enthusiasts

1. Speak up (believe in power of camp)
2. Show up (visit & send others to camp)
3. Put up (give annually to camp)

43%

Camp Accomodators

Generally speak well of camping ministry but do not consistently give, visit, and encourage participation.

18%

Camp Skeptics

Ambivalent or overtly critical of camping ministries.

MINISTER IMPRESSIONS OF OUTDOOR MINISTRY

■ Strongly agree

■ Somewhat agree

■ Neither agree nor disagree

■ Disagree

