

# Who could you encourage to *consider ministry?*

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**Anna** has seen God's hand throughout her life. As a young child growing up in Florida, she faced a life-threatening moment after swallowing a nickel-sized battery, which led to multiple surgeries.

*My scars are a constant reminder of God's unending love. He has given me a story that allows me to share my faith and his love with everyone I meet.*

Anna continued to see God's hand when, after 10 years in Florida, she moved to Garden Grove, CA. Living there gave her a unique perspective on ministry. "Living in a big city, I had many cross-cultural experiences." These helped shape her desire to serve in full-time ministry.

Guided by her Confirmation verse, Jeremiah 29:11, Anna shares, "I want to share what God has done in my life with others so that they, too, can know of God's endless love."

Look around! Anna sat in a pew just like yours. Who will go out into the harvest next?

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Joel grew up just 15 minutes from the Seminary. The summer before his senior year, a Sem student from his congregation invited him to lift weights, play basketball, and join a softball team with Seminary guys.

*The more I hung around those Sem guys, I saw how normal they were and I started to think about doing what they were doing. God used that friendship to change my life.*

That mentor's influence didn't stop at recruitment. Over Christmas break of Joel's senior year, he talked to him about NWC, and Joel decided to give it a try. The relationship continued to bear fruit long after, when Joel accepted a call away from his first congregation. Joel continues to thank God for placing that Sem student in his life at exactly the right moment. A simple invitation to shoot hoops became the beginning of a lifetime of ministry.

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Tim's path to ministry started in first grade and took a detour through a recruiter's table. As a child, he thought being a pastor sounded like a pretty good deal, and he was right!

*I couldn't pursue my first choice, so I went back to my childhood second choice: pastor. I gave MLC just one year to see if it was the path for me.*

Tim had always been drawn to military service, stopping regularly at the Armed Forces recruiter's table in his high school lunchroom. But his asthma barred him from enlisting in active duty, reserves, and National Guard alike. With that door closed, he turned back to something he'd carried since first grade. He gave MLC one year, griping about the cold and the culture shock the whole time. But by the end of that year, he knew: the pastor track was the track for him. God had directed his path all along.

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Chris grew up in a home where faith wasn't just for Sunday mornings. His parents modeled it in everything: from shoveling out the car to get to church in a blizzard to paying for any friend his siblings brought to lunch.

*There was so much joy in my family around going to church. I loved the idea of making that joyous time, being around God's Word and believers, my full-time work.*

What shaped Chris most was the consistency of fellow members. He can still picture exactly where everyone sat at the 10:30 a.m. service. Fellow members showed him what it looked like to live their faith, week after week. A high school mission trip brought it into focus: by stepping outside his regular setting, he could finally picture what it would mean to serve a congregation of his own. That vision never left him. It became the foundation of service in the public ministry.

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Jennifer grew up in Nampa, Idaho, where her church was the only WELS congregation in the entire state. Confirmed in a class of one, she found her people at church camp and those friendships set everything in motion.

*Pay attention to the little clues. You never know where God is trying to lead you and the path he has in mind may be bigger than anything you could plan yourself.*

Jennifer had wanted to be a teacher since second grade, but it was her camp friendships, her father's book on Mormonism, and the LDS friends who left their church that pushed her toward ministry. She arrived at Martin Luther College not knowing a soul but she left with lifelong friends and a calling. She's now director of a growing preschool in Idaho and spends her days teaching the saving gospel of Jesus to LDS families in the community. She gets a front-row seat to see God work in ways she never anticipated.

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**Katie** grew up with a pastor for a dad and a teacher for a mom. She understood the commitment of ministry, so she just wasn't sure it was right for her. Her plan was simple: be a mom and stay home with her kids.

*All I really wanted to be was a mom. But studying for the teaching ministry turned out to be the best preparation for that I could have possibly chosen.*

When Katie told her mom she just wanted to stay home and raise her children, her mom shared an alternate perspective. Studying for the teaching ministry, she said, was probably the best way to prepare for motherhood. Katie took that to heart. The education proved her mom right; it shaped how she raised her children in ways she hadn't expected. Now that her kids have grown, Katie finds herself doing exactly what she was made for: raising *other* children in Christ in her classroom.

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