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**ASFP Application Form for Fellows**

# Regional Synod of Albany

Fellowship Program

2021

**Part I: Introduction to the Albany Synod Fellowship Program**

**Any seminary graduate who meets the standards of the ASFP is eligible to apply.**These standards include:

* M. Div. degree awarded before the expected start of the fellowship, with a minimum GPA of 3.0 (or equivalent)
* Eligible for ordination: prior to the expected start of the fellowship, the fellow must be either a) an ordained Minister of Word and sacrament in the Reformed Church in America; b) a licensed candidate for that office; or c) a student under care in good standing who has been awarded the Certificate of Fitness for Ministry by an agent of the General Synod
* Experience in preaching, leading worship, and other forms of congregational ministry
* Evidence of spiritual maturity, Christian commitment, and love for the church
* Evidence of good character, particularly with regard to flexibility, teachableness, humility, and skills in self-management

**Albany Synod expects of its ASFP Fellows:**

* Willing engagement with the prescribed ASFP programs and activities of fellows
* Active encouragement of one’s ministry site in their participation in prescribed ASFP programs and activities for ministry sites, particularly by sharing relevant information

***The deadline for application to the ASFP is March 15, 2021.***

**A completed application includes:**

* Completed *ASFP Application Form for Fellows*
* *Letter* from an officer of the classis of which the applicant is a member, a licensed candidate, or a student under care, indicating that they meet the standards above
* Letters of reference from one RCA minister, one member of home congregation or internship site, and one seminary professor
* Completed RCA Minister Profile Form

**Please submit the completed application to:**

Lindsey DeKruif, Albany Synod Fellowship Program Coordinator,

1790 Grand Blvd., Schenectady NY 12309

Questions about the ASFP or the application process may be directed to:

Abby Norton-Levering, nortonlevering@gmail.com or 518.374.4573

Or after Feb. 15, 2021, to Lindsey DeKruif, lindsey.dekruif@gmail.com or 507.227.6942

**Statement of Purpose for the ASFP:**

The purpose of the Albany Synod Fellowship Program is to provide an intentional and transitional program of preparation for ministers serving congregations within the Regional Synod of Albany. It will support new ministers as they learn to lead adaptive change and grow into their pastoral vocation, so that they and their congregations might flourish in mutual ministry. It will also support Albany Synod congregations in growing their capacity to be missional, teaching churches.

**Brief Description:**

The ASFP is a two-year transition-into-ministry program for recent seminary graduates, herein referred to as “fellows.” They are placed in congregational settings, herein referred to as “ministry sites.” Both fellows and ministry sites are chosen through an application process to assess for readiness for our rigorous program and alignment with our guiding values. Each ministry site forms a congregational team of 4-6 people to support, learn and grow alongside its fellow.

**ASFP Guiding Values:**

* Ministers and congregations are agents of their own transformation, and the synod’s intention is to foster and support that transformation through the ASFP
* Adults learn best when they have the opportunity to experiment, learn with others, and reflect, both individually and in peer groups, with the support of experienced coaches, mentors and/or spiritual directors
* Compassion, humility and creativity are gifts integral to ministry and worth nurturing
* The current reality of ministry within the church and especially the RSA calls for new, flexible and adaptive forms of leadership
* The church and its leaders long for a deepening spiritual maturity so as to become more fully alive in Christ
* Failure is unavoidable, yet it is also a good opportunity for learning
* Transitioning from seminary to pastoral ministry is a journey that poses challenges and presents opportunities, such as disillusionment, discovery and growth

**ASFP Components:**

* *Regular small-group coaching* for fellows
* *Faithwalking 101, 201, 202 and 301 participation* for fellows
* *Faithwalking 101 and 201* for mentor pastors (202 and 301 are optional)
* *Faithwalking 101* for congregational team members (201, 202 and 301 are optional)
* *First Call Program,* a series of learning events for fellows and congregational teams, to support each congregation in becoming a more missional teaching church
* *Healthy Communications Workshop* for fellows and congregational teams
* *Beginning and Beyond Retreat* for clergy new to their ministries in Albany Synod
* *Financial Health Workshop,* focused on educating new clergy about taxes, housing and retirement planning
* *Periodic evaluation* of fellows, by themselves and by the peer group facilitator

**Any Albany Synod congregation served by a first call pastor, even though they are not an ASFP ministry site, may choose to sign up for RCA’s First Call Project and thereby participate in the programmatic components described above.**

The following components are for chosen ministry sites only:

* *Financial support* to ministry sites, partially funding salary and benefits for fellows
* *Human Resources support* to ministry sites

**Part II: to be completed by ASFP Fellow Applicants**

1. **What excites you most about participating in the Albany Synod Fellowship Program?**
2. **Describe your vision and hopes for your next two years of ministry.**
3. **Describe your dream ministry placement. What components would really make your heart sing?**
4. **Please choose two or three of the ASFP Guiding Values listed on page 2 of this application, and reflect briefly on them. What draws you to these values? What challenges you about them?**

**Regional Synod of Albany**

**Fellowship Program**

**Release Statement**

**(Full Name)**

**I,** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **acknowledge that the information in this application is accurate and complete. I authorize the Planning Committee of the Albany Synod Fellowship Program to share this application to designated church(es) seeking to be chosen as ASFP Ministry Sites.**

**Signature of Fellowship Applicant Date**