



**British Columbia Synod**

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

# **BC Synod Call Process Manual**

Revised September 2018



**BRITISH COLUMBIA SYNOD**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada  
80 East 10th Avenue, New Westminster, British Columbia V3L 4R5  
Tel (604) 524-1318 Fax (604) 524-9255

## **CALL PROCESS MANUAL**

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Congregations experiencing a time of being “between pastors” enter into a unique time of self discovery, decision making, and looking ahead to the future. This interim period is a special time for reflection and prayer during which the Congregational Council needs to provide strong leadership, exercising sensitive care for the people of the congregation and encouraging strong bonds of unity and trust in God.

When a pastor resigns or retires, the primary concern for many congregations is to find a new pastor as quickly as possible. Although no one can guarantee how long a particular call process will take, many congregations underestimate the time needed for completion of the call process. However, congregations are encouraged not to hurry the process. The interim period between the leaving of one pastor and the arrival of another provides a valuable opportunity for the congregation to reassess its sense of mission and ministry for the future. It should be an intentional time of reflection and transition and should not be passed over quickly.

This manual describes the call process as it is administered within the BC Synod. The process, as outlined, provides guidelines whereby the congregation and the office of the Bishop can work together in an efficient and positive manner.

Please know that you will be in my prayers as you journey through the call process. May God grant you generous gifts of wisdom, patience and perseverance!

Peace be with you all,

+ Bishop Greg Mohr

## CALL PROCESS MANUAL

### Table of Contents

Section 1	Introduction .....	pages 4 - 6
	A. How to Use this Manual	
	B. An Overview of the Call Process	
	C. Checklist for the Congregational Council	
	D. Checklist for the Call Committee	
Section 2	Saying Goodbye .....	pages 7 - 10
	A. Introduction	
	B. How Will You Bid Your Pastor Farewell?	
	C. The Exit Interview	
	D. Dotting the I's and Crossing the T's	
Section 3	Starting the Process – Council's Role .....	pages 11 - 15
	A. Introduction	
	B. The Congregational Profile	
	C. Appointing the Call Committee	
	D. Meeting of Congregational Council with the Bishop	
	E. Appointing the Interim Pastor	
Section 4	The Call Committee .....	pages 16 - 27
	A. Getting Organized	
	B. Meeting of Call Committee with the Bishop	
	C. Communication	
	D. Confidentiality	
	E. Reviewing Mobility Forms	
	F. The Interview Process	
	G. Making a Decision	
	H. Following Up	
Section 5	Preparing for the Call Meeting .....	pages 28 - 30
	A. Preparing the Compensation Package	
	B. The Call Meeting	
Section 6	New Beginnings .....	pages 31 - 32
	A. New Beginnings	
	B. Another Ending	
	C. Press Release	
	D. Invite the Community and the Wider Church	

Appendixes .....	page 33-62
1. Sample Liturgies .....	pages 34-37
A. Rite of Farewell and Godspeed for a Pastor and his/her family	
B. Recognition of an Interim Pastor	
C. Rite of Farewell and Godspeed for an Interim	
2. Guidelines for Congregations Calling an Additional Pastor .....	pages 38-39
3. Guidelines Related to Interim Pastoral Ministry .....	page 40
4. To Call a Pastor (Devotions for Call Committees) .....	pages 41-45
A. We Consider our own Calling	
B. We Consider God's Gifts	
C. We Consider Congregation and Community Needs	
D. We Consider Ministry Gifts	
E. We Consider the Changing Context/New Opportunities and Challenges	
5. Some Theological Considerations .....	pages 46-47
A. The Call to Ordained Ministry and the Call to a Specific Ministry	
B. The Partnership Between the Whole Church and the Local Church	
C. The Call Process is Unique	
D. The Right Question	
6. Sample Letters .....	pages 48-50
A. Inviting a Candidate for an Interview	
B. Thanking a Candidate for an Interview	
C. Releasing a Candidate after an Interview	
7. Interim Pastoral Ministry Covenant.....	page 51
8. Call Process Evaluation Form for Call Committees .....	pages 52-54
9. Certification of Call Procedure form .....	page 55
10. Letter of Call .....	pages 56-59
11. First Call Program Outline .....	pages 60-62

# **British Columbia Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada Call Process Manual**

## **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION**

- 1A. How to Use this Manual
- 1B. An Overview of the Call Process
- 1C. Checklist for the Congregational Council
- 1D. Checklist for the Call Committee

### **1A. How to Use This Manual**

There is a lot of material in this manual, and it may seem a little overwhelming at first. Start by familiarizing yourself with the Table of Contents and then review the Overview of the Call Process (Section 1B) and the Sample Time line for the Call Process (Section 1C).

Members of the Congregational Council and the Call Committee should receive digital copies of this Manual. You can make printed copies as you have need.

Remember, if you have any questions about the manual or about the process, please contact the Bishop's office.

### **1B. An Overview of the Call Process**

When the pastor submits a letter of resignation, the chairperson of the congregation contacts the Bishop to initiate the call process.

A copy of the British Columbia Synod Call Process Manual will be sent to the congregation.

The congregation prepares to say goodbye to their pastor (Section 2).

The Congregational Council prepares the Congregational Profile and appoints a Call Committee (Sections 3B and 3C).

The Bishop or Bishop's representative meets with the Council to discuss the appointment of an interim pastor and to review the Congregational Profile.

The Bishop or Bishop's representative meets with the Call Committee to develop a list of candidates for consideration for call. The Bishop shall solicit mobility forms from those on the list (Section 3D).

The Call Committee reviews the mobility forms that are submitted and creates a short list of

names for an initial telephone interview. The Call Committee contacts the individuals on the interview list, inviting each candidate to a telephone or face-to-face interview, and attaching a copy of the Congregational Profile and the most recent annual report of the congregation. The letter will also request, where applicable, a copy of the most recent annual report of the congregation where the pastor is presently serving (Section 4D).

The letters are followed up by phone calls to arrange the telephone interviews.

Interviews take place. (Section 4E)

Call committee selects one candidate to be the Primary Candidate and invites that candidate for an on-site interview.

Call committee decides whether or not to recommend the Primary Candidate for call.

Once this decision has been made, the Call Committee contacts the Bishop to share their decision.

The Call Committee formally presents its recommendation to the Congregational Council. The Council votes on the recommendation and, if the vote is positive, prepares the compensation package with assistance from synod office.

A call meeting date is set (Sections 4F and 5A).

The Call Committee contacts all other candidates in writing to inform them a recommendation has been made and to thank them for participating in the search process (Section 4G).

The call meeting takes place. A 2/3s majority vote is required for the Letter of Call to be extended (Section 5B).

When a Letter of Call is extended, the pastor normally has 30 days to respond to the Call.

Once a call is accepted, the new pastor usually takes office within 2 to 3 months.

The new pastor normally is installed (Section 6) by the Dean of the Conference.

### **1C. Checklist for the Congregational Council**

- Contact the Bishop by phone or letter to initiate the call process.
- Send the completed Congregational Profile to the synod office.
- Appoint a Call Committee.
- Authorize funds for the work of the Call Committee.
- Arrange a meeting with the Bishop and, where appropriate, the Call Committee.
- Consult with the Bishop for the appointment of an interim pastor.
- Arrange a farewell for the pastor who is leaving.
- Hold an exit interview with the pastor who is leaving.
- Disband the current mutual ministry committee and thank them for their work.
- Meet with the Call Committee to hear their recommendation for call.
- Vote on the recommendation.
- Inform Synod Office of your decision.
- Prepare the compensation package with assistance from Synod Office.
- Set a call meeting date in consultation with Synod Office.
- Announce the call meeting date to the congregation.
- Hold the call meeting.
- Arrange for the installation of the new pastor in consultation with the pastor and synod office.
- Work with the pastor to appoint a new mutual ministry committee.

### **1E. Checklist for the Call Committee**

- Appoint a chairperson and secretary.
- Review the completed Congregational Profile.
- Meet with the Bishop or Bishop's Representative to develop a list of names for consideration for call.
- Review the mobility forms that are submitted.
- Create a short list of no more than three names for interviewing.
- Write letters to candidates you are not interviewing
- Contact the individuals on the interview list, inviting them for a phone or face-to-face interview.
- Follow up letters with phone calls and arrange phone interviews.
- Prepare for phone interviews.
- Conduct interviews.
- Call committee selects a Primary Candidate.
- Arrange a face-to-face interview with the call committee and a meet-and-greet with the congregation.
- Reimburse candidates for expenses.
- Decide on a candidate to recommend to Congregational Council.
- Inform Synod Office of your decision.
- Meet with Congregational Council to make your recommendation.
- Write to all candidates.

- 2A. Introduction
- 2B. How Will You Bid Your Pastor Farewell?
- 2C. The Exit Interview
- 2D. Dotting the I's and Crossing the T's

## **2A. Introduction**

When a pastor announces her/his resignation it usually comes as a surprise. Often it is an unwanted surprise, particularly when the pastor is well liked and has performed an effective ministry.

No matter what the relationship has been between the pastor and the congregation, it is important to take the time to plan for a good ending to your shared ministry. A good ending with this pastor will help you be ready for a good beginning with a new pastor.

In this section you will find some suggestions that will help you in saying goodbye.

## **2B. How Will You Bid Your Pastor Farewell?**

It is often difficult to say goodbye to a person with whom one has been intimately associated. Therefore, it is wise to establish a “new” relationship with the departing pastor. This begins with the announcement of the resignation, but it goes far beyond that. Council should work with the pastor on the best use of the remaining time. What will be the significant events that lead up to the actual departure? What individuals and groups does that pastor want or need to say goodbye to? What events will be planned to honour and thank the departing pastor, and where applicable, the pastor’s family?

Here is a list of suggestions of ways to honour your pastor:

- Hold a congregational dinner or potluck, or plan for a special reception after a worship service.
- Use a slide show, skits, or speeches to highlight special memories.
- Collect written testimonials from members and put them in a book to present to the pastor.
- Present a gift.
- Plan for a special closing worship service. Use the “Rite of Farewell and Godspeed (Appendix 1A).

Good-byes are not easy and some people want to just “ride off into the sunset.” At the same time, by planning opportunities for people to say goodbye, there is an opportunity to “end well.”



## 2C. The Exit Interview

Prior to the Pastor's departure, an opportunity should be set aside in a relaxed setting for an "exit interview." The exit interview is intended to be a dialogue between the departing pastor and a few members of the congregation focused around issues of their ministry together during the pastor's tenure.

It is a time for debriefing, for learning any details that may have been unknown, for hearing the pastor's hopes for the congregation, and for clarifying the relationship the pastor will have with the congregation after departure. It is an opportunity for looking back and reflecting on the life and ministry to which each has contributed, celebrating the successes, acknowledging the failures, and bringing closure to things unresolved.

The departing pastor should be advised of the distinctly positive nature of the exit interview. He/she should be made aware that even though such an interview is strongly recommended, it is an optional event surrounding his/her leaving. He/she should be given the choice of who should participate. Participants might be selected from the Congregational Council, the Call Committee, the mutual ministry committee, and/or other church leaders.

The event should be given structure, but not to the extent that free and open dialogue is inhibited. Two cautions: Don't try to reverse the resignation decision. Don't get drawn in to debate and argue. Rather, listen carefully to each other.

The following are some "dialogue starter" questions which might be useful:

To the pastor:

1. "What were your hopes and dreams for the congregation when you began your ministry here?"
2. "What were some of the surprises you encountered in your first months among us?"
3. "What have been some of your joys and sorrows during your ministry here?"
4. "What were some of the high points of your ministry here?"
5. "In what ways are we different now from when you came?"
6. "What are some of your present concerns for the congregation as you bring your ministry to a close?"
7. "How can we help you in your transition?"
8. "What can we do to support our new pastor?"

To members present:

1. “What gifts has Pastor \_\_\_\_\_ given to this congregation during his/her ministry?”
2. “Are there events or memories which had special meaning that anyone would like to share?”
3. “How will Pastor \_\_\_\_\_ be remembered by the members of our congregation??

It is also important to clarify the relationship the pastor will have with the congregation after her/his departure. The synod constitution defines the relationship in this way:

No ordained minister shall preach or perform any ministerial act within the parish of another pastor except at the latter’s request or consent, or visit or perform ministerial acts in a time of a pastoral vacancy except by invitation of its congregational Council (Bylaw 4, Section 11).

Discuss together what this means. Consider different scenarios such as possible requests for funerals, weddings, and baptisms. Discuss putting an announcement similar to the following in the congregational newsletter after the pastor leaves:

“While Pastor \_\_\_\_\_ is still a pastor of the ELCIC, he/she is no longer our pastor. We love and cherish the friendship we have had, but we should not ask for further pastoral services such as counselling, baptisms, weddings, and funerals.”

Close your exit interview with prayer.

## **2D. Dotting the I’s and Crossing the T’s**

Before the pastor leaves, all important parish papers and records must be located and inventoried. Be sure the pastor has brought all records up-to-date. For your information, here is a checklist of items that need to be in order:

- Records of membership, baptisms, confirmations, marriages, births, funerals, transfers, communions, and contributions;
- Annual Congregational Report Forms (parochial reports) and recent congregational meeting reports and minutes;
- Prospective members list;

- Pastoral care situations that need special attention including sick and shut-in member needs;
- Contracts that are yet to be fulfilled; and financial obligations.

Before the pastor leaves it is also important that all financial obligations the congregation has to the pastor are taken care of. Such obligations may include:

1. Salary;
2. Housing allowance;
3. Mileage expenses;
4. Pension and benefits;
5. Book allowance and Continuing Education fund.

This is also the time to disband the existing mutual ministry committee and thank them for their work. Make sure that the committee members know that you have appreciated their work, but that it is important for the new pastor to have input into the makeup of the committee. If you do not have a mutual ministry committee, this may be the time to consider having one. Resources are available from the synod office.

## **SECTION 3: STARTING THE PROCESS – COUNCIL’S ROLE**

- 3A. Introduction
- 3B. The Congregational Profile
- 3C. Appointing the Call Committee
- 3D. Meeting of Congregational Council with the Bishop
- 3E. Appointing the Interim Pastor
- 3F. Meeting of Call Committee with the Bishop

### **3A. Introduction**

Following the resignation of a pastor, there is an immediate need for an ordered process to keep a sense of stability in the congregation’s life and to help people stay focussed on the mission they share as God’s people in this place. The responsibility for this leadership lies with the Congregational Council.

The transition period will bring extra responsibilities for Council. These may include:

- Oversee and guide the ministry of the congregation during the time between pastoral leadership.
- Provide reassurance to the congregation that pastoral ministry tasks will be fulfilled.
- Provide leadership to assure the continuation of services of worship and to assist those who will lead worship (supply pastors, interim pastors, assisting ministers, musicians, and others).
- Give support and guidance to those staff persons (office personnel, music personnel, custodial personnel, etc.) who normally function under pastoral oversight (continuation of staff meetings or conversations which help clarify needs, directions and expectations).
- Assure continuation of pastoral ministries (hospital visits, other visitations, emergency pastoral response, funerals, weddings, confirmation, and baptisms).
- Be a resource to the next called pastor and assist her/him in the continuation of immediate and special pastoral ministry needs.

### **3B. The Congregational Profile**

The development of the Congregational Profile (accessed on the BC Synod web site) prior to the calling of a new pastor is helpful in several ways:

1. It provides the Call Committee with basic information and a description of leadership needs which will guide their work.
2. The profile will assist the Bishop in recommending candidate(s) to be considered by the Call Committee.
3. It provides a picture of the congregation for the candidates as they consider serving the congregation.

Therefore, allow adequate time to thoroughly complete the Congregational Profile. The purpose of the Congregational Profile is to enable the elected lay leadership of the congregation to:

1. Review the congregation's life and mission.
2. Evaluate the congregation's present strengths.
3. Identify specific areas where the congregation needs to strengthen its ministry.
4. Specify resources necessary to fulfill the mission of the congregation, including mission tasks and opportunities in the parish community.
5. Arrive at a current understanding of the mission of the congregation.
6. Identify the gifts that are most important for the next pastor to possess.

**The Congregational Profile has five parts:**

- Part I - Congregation Information
- Part II - Ministry Practices and Structure
- Part III - Mission in the Community
- Part IV - Where is God Leading Us?
- Part V - The Leader We Seek

Responsibility for completion of the Congregational Profile belongs with the Congregational Council. The Congregational Council may, at its discretion, assign a special committee to complete this task.

It is recommended that as many people as possible participate in answering Part V - **“The Leader We Seek.”** Fuller participation can be achieved by mailing Part V to congregation members or by having members fill them out before or after worship services.

While the time for a comprehensive survey of the membership may lengthen the call process, the benefit of including and listening to many voices from the congregation will bear much good fruit and be well worth the time spent. In the end, however, it is the responsibility of the Council to make a final decision on the primary leadership priorities for the congregation.

As you prepare the Congregational Profile, take care to avoid the following two situations:

1. Do not attempt to make the congregation or parish sound better than it is by downplaying financial, property or spiritual problems. Be honest; tell it as it is.
2. Do not make claims you have not fully thought through, such as the statement “We want more young people and new members.” To bring new members and young people into the church usually requires significant change and planning on the part of the entire congregation. One of the biggest areas of discontent for clergy arises from unrealistic expectations with little support.

Note: If your pastor will be serving in a multiple staff situation, please refer to Appendix 2, Guidelines for Pastors in Staff Ministries, for more information.

When the profile is completed, a copy is to be e-mailed to the Synod Office so the Bishop or Bishop’s representative will have time to study it prior to the meetings with Council and with the Call Committee.

In addition, make sure that the completed congregational profile is made available for congregational members to read.

### **3C. Appointing the Call Committee**

It is the responsibility of the Congregational Council to appoint the Call Committee. In a multi-point parish arrangement, the responsibility lies with the Parish Council. In some situations the Council may choose to serve as the Call Committee.

When appointing the Call Committee, consider the makeup of the congregation, ensuring that a diversity of gender, age, and ethnic/racial identity is represented, as well as representation from various segments of the ministry of the congregation, such as Worship, Youth, Education, Faith and Society, etc.

It is recommended that the committee be comprised of 6-8 persons. It may include 1 or 2 members of the Congregational Council.

Because of additional demands on the chair of the Congregational Council during a pastoral transition, it is recommended that the chair of the Congregational Council not be the chair of the Call Committee.

The Call Committee should be given a complete copy of this Call Process Manual as well as copies of the completed Congregational Profile.

The Congregational Council also needs to give the Call Committee information concerning the salary and benefit range that the congregation can consider.

Salary and benefit considerations are not matters which are to be negotiated between the candidate and Call Committee. The Call Committee, for example, does not have the authority to commit the congregation to a dollar figure or an extra week of vacation or additional educational leave.

The Congregational Council also needs to authorize funding to the Call Committee for its use in carrying out its responsibilities, such as cost of travel, meals and hotel expense for candidates invited to come to interview, or for travel by the committee to hear a candidate preach at some other location.

Prayer is an important activity for both the Call Committee and the entire congregation throughout this process. Call Committee members are encouraged to commit themselves to pray for one another and for the work of the Holy Spirit among them as they seek to discern God's will for their congregation. Special prayer at worship and during other meetings of the congregation is encouraged.

When the Call Committee is selected, the names of the members are made public, with request that special prayers be made on their behalf.

### **3D. Meeting of Congregational Council with the Bishop**

Once the completed Congregational Profile is received by the Synod Office, a meeting is held with the Bishop or Bishop's representative and the Congregational Council.

The agenda of the meeting shall include the following:

1. Review of the Congregational Profile.
2. Brief overview of the Call Process and the roles of Council and the Call Committee.
3. Appointment of an Interim Pastor.

### **3E. Appointing the Interim Pastor**

The Congregational Council is responsible for the appointment of an interim pastor for the congregation. This is done in consultation with the Bishop or Bishop's representative. Sometimes the geographic location of a congregation or the number of retired pastors in a region may limit the choices available for interim ministry. However, pastors from the Anglican Church of Canada also may be considered for appointment as interim pastors.

Interim Ministry is compensated according to the current BC synod salary guidelines. It is expected that the church council, in consultation with the Bishop and the interim pastor, will negotiate the expected duties and the anticipated number of hours. Duties will include worship

leadership, attendance at church council meetings, and emergency pastoral care. They may also include hospital and or shut-in visitation, confirmation instruction, office hours and so on.

In situations where the interim pastor lives a long way away from the congregation, compensation for driving time will be negotiated separately.

Some facts about interim pastors:

- An interim pastor assumes the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor. (Bylaw 4, Section 12).
- The interim pastor normally serves the congregation by covenanted agreement.
- The interim pastors cannot be considered for the regular call of the congregation.
- Interim pastors shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor (Bylaw 4, Section 12).

All interim ministry relationships with an individual congregation, whether by appointment or call, can be terminated as per covenanted agreement.

For more information see the document “Guidelines Related to Interim Pastoral Ministry” (Appendix 3) and the Interim Ministry Covenant (Appendix 7).

You also may wish to use the service “Recognition of an Interim Pastor” (Appendix 1B) as a means of beginning your interim pastor’s ministry. This might take place within the Sunday service or at a Council meeting.



## **SECTION 4: THE CALL COMMITTEE**

- 4A. Getting Organized
- 4B. Meeting of the Call Committee with the Bishop
- 4C. Communication
- 4D. Confidentiality
- 4E. Reviewing Mobility Forms
- 4F. The Interview Process
- 4G. Making a Decision
- 4H. Following Up

### **4A. Getting Organized**

The Call Committee is a special congregational committee whose sole purpose is to recommend a pastoral candidate to the congregation. Time needs to be taken for members of the Call Committee to become comfortable with one another and to cement a solid working partnership. Time spent in healthy dialogue within the Call Committee will contribute to developing this relationship.

Prayer is an important activity for the Call Committee and for the entire congregation throughout this process. Call Committee members are encouraged to commit themselves to pray for one another and for the work of the Holy Spirit among them as they seek to discern God's will for their congregation.

In Appendix 4 you will find "Five Brief Devotions for Call Committees (and others)" to help you in your prayers.

After some preliminary getting acquainted, the committee selects a Chair and a Secretary. The Chair convenes meetings, sets meeting agendas, is the contact person with the Bishop's Office, and may be the primary contact with candidates.

The Secretary keeps the minutes of Call Committee meetings. The Secretary also is responsible for written communication between candidates and the committee (letters or e-mails informing candidates of the committee's time line and the interview process to be used, confirming invitations, thank you notes, and letters informing candidates of decisions reached), sends copies of correspondence to the Synod Office, and may write the newsletter articles, notes for Sunday bulletins, etc. which keep the congregation informed of the committee's progress. Some of these duties may be delegated to other members of the committee.

The Call Committee also needs to make other decisions necessary for good order and clear communication, such as the frequency and duration of meetings, rules of order for transacting business, issues of confidentiality, and adoption of either a majority vote (either a simple majority or a 2/3 majority) or consensus model for decision making. Committee members also should review the document "Some Theological Considerations" (Appendix 5).

Many people report that serving on a Call Committee turned out to be one of the most important things they ever did as members of the Church. It allowed them to experience firsthand how the Holy Spirit works through committed Christians to help the Church be faithful to its calling. It gave them an opportunity to see how the local Church is vitally connected to the whole Church and to participate in opening a new chapter in the life and ministry of their congregation. We hope and pray that this will be the case for you!

Sometimes the call process can be confusing and frustrating. The office of the Bishop is there to help you. Please do not hesitate to call for assistance. In some instances, the Synod Office may be able to match you up with a neighbouring parish that has recently completed the call process in order that they can share their newly acquired expertise.

#### **4B. Meeting of Call Committee with the Bishop**

Once the Call Committee has been appointed by the Congregational Council and the Congregational Profile has been received by the Synod Office, a meeting is held with the Bishop or Bishop's representative and the Call Committee.

The purpose of this meeting is two-fold:

1. Review of the Congregational Profile.
2. Review of the Call Process and the roles of the Congregational Council and the Call Committee.

#### **□ Develop a List of Names for Consideration for Call**

Names of potential candidates for call may come from three sources:

##### **1. Names Provided by the Council or Call Committee**

Members of Council and of the Call Committee are invited to submit names for consideration.

##### **2. Names Provided by Members of the Congregation**

In addition, the congregation may be invited to submit names for consideration. Individuals may suggest:

- The pastor of a previous congregation where they have been a member.
- A pastor they have met at a church convention.
- A pastor of a congregation where they have worshipped on vacation.

- A previous intern or student from your congregation.
- A pastor recommended to you by a member of the congregation.

Please note that these pastors may be unaware that their names are being suggested and may not be open to call at this time.

### **3. Additional Names Suggested by the Bishop or Bishop's Representative**

The Bishop or Bishop's Representative also will suggest the names of pastors who have the specific leadership needs identified by the Congregational Profile as well as the names of pastors who have asked to have their names provided for consideration in this call process.

All of the names suggested will be discussed. Some names may be removed from the list at this time. After the meeting the Bishop will solicit mobility forms from those who have been identified for further consideration.

*Please Note: It is important that members of the Call Committee or the congregation NOT contact the potential candidates directly. The names should be submitted to the Bishop, and the bishop contacts the candidate's judicatory to determine the candidate's eligibility for call.*

It is likely that some of the candidates you are considering at this point will not choose to participate in your call process. There are many reasons for individuals to make such a choice including:

- The Pastor has been in his/her present call a fairly short time.
- The congregation where the pastor presently serves may be in the midst of a major project such as a building program or another significant event.
- Family considerations can play a significant role for some pastors and their availability for call. The age and schooling of children, the spouse's occupation, or care for parents or other family members are all examples of why a pastor may decline participation.

The pastor is under no obligation to share reasons with you should the pastor decline to participate in the call process. It is important not to take these declinations as rejections.

### **4C. Communication**

The Call Committee must report regularly to the Congregational Council. In addition, the Call Committee will need to determine, with the Congregational Council, the means, frequency and nature of communication with the congregation. Even if there is no new information to report, or if confidentiality prevents the Call Committee from sharing information, it still is a wise idea for

the Call Committee to convey to the congregation that the committee is meeting and actively working on the call process.

The Call Committee may decide to communicate through a variety of means including:

1. Notes in the Sunday bulletin announcing that the Call Committee is meeting keeps the congregation informed of progress.
2. Newsletter articles explaining the Call Process to the congregation can be helpful, with follow up articles each time another stage in the process is reached.
3. Verbal reports by a member of the Call Committee to update the congregation on a weekly basis also is recommended. (Even if the report is “Nothing has changed from last week,” it is very helpful to let people know what is happening in the Call Process. Also, from one week to the next, you will not necessarily be reporting to exactly the same audience.)
4. Sunday / Weekday Adult Class - use for reemphasizing the process, “Where we are,” etc. This format invites interaction and feedback.
5. Bulletin board postings.
6. Informal conversation with Call Committee members during coffee hour.

Some points to include in your communication are:

- Description of process
- Summary of specific presentations, e.g. the Bishop’s visit
- Outline of progress - this would include past, present and future
- List of actions taken
- The preferred process for communicating with the members of the Call Committee

Some things you want to accomplish through your communication are:

1. That the congregation will clearly understand the process, including the roles of the Bishop’s Office, Council, Call Committee and Congregation.
2. Identification of the members of the Call Committee.
3. Members will have a clear understanding of the proper process for communicating with the members of the Call Committee.
4. With the exception of confidential materials, there is no such thing as too much information!

#### **4D. Confidentiality**

Confidentiality in the Call Committee discussions should be clearly agreed upon at the first meeting. Conversations about candidates need to be open and forthright within the committee. These discussions, however, should be kept in strict confidence between the Call Committee members.

The importance of confidentiality cannot be overemphasized in the task of calling a pastor. It is

inappropriate to mention specific candidates outside the Call Committee, including the names of those on the call list, until the committee is ready to share its recommendation of a Primary Candidate with the Congregational Council. It is important to keep all names, as well as any verbal or written information about prospective candidates, within the confines of the committee. This means committee members will need to establish ground rules and boundaries, not only with the congregation at large, but also with those in their own household or place of work. One of the things to consider as you think about confidentiality is the difference between openness and holding confidence. Openness means that the Call Committee needs to report regularly to Council and the congregation in order to help everyone understand the process. Holding confidence means that the Call Committee needs to keep all of the verbal and written information about the individual candidates to themselves. **At the end of the call process, all materials related to candidates not being called shall be destroyed.**

#### **4E. Reviewing Mobility Forms**

After meeting with the Congregational Council, the Bishop will contact the potential candidates and request mobility forms. (A sample copy of the mobility form can be found on the BC Synod web site.) The candidates will be asked to send their mobility forms to the Synod Office by a specified date.

Once all mobility forms have been received a meeting with the Bishop or Bishop's Representative and the Call Committee will be scheduled to review the forms.

The committee as a whole should review the mobility forms one at a time, allowing lots of time for discussion and the sharing of individual comments and questions.

- **Rating the Mobility Forms**

Once the mobility forms have been reviewed, it is time to begin a more formal rating process. The most important thing to keep in mind as you begin this step is that you need to view the candidate's mobility forms through the "lens" of the Congregational Profile. You have probably already noticed that the category "**Ministry Priorities and Skills**" in the Congregational Profile contains the same information and in the same order as the Ministry Priorities, Skills, Interests section in the mobility form. Comparing these two sections will help you to narrow down which candidates might be a good match for your congregation.

- **Selecting an Interview List**

After you have rated the mobility forms, you need to identify a list of candidates that you want to interview.

- **Follow Up**

Once your interview list is complete, you need to contact the candidates on the list by letter or e-mail (using the form letter you find identified as Appendix 6B), inviting them for an

interview and requesting, where applicable, a copy of their most recent annual report.

Interviews either can be conducted by telephone or face-to-face. However, it is important to use the same method for interviewing each of the candidates.

With the letter you will send a copy of the Congregational Profile and your most recent annual report.

The chair of the Call Committee will then follow up the letters by telephone to arrange the interview with each candidate. There is a possibility that some of the candidates might decline to be interviewed. Do not be discouraged by this, but continue on with the rest of your list. If at all possible, arrange for interviews to take place as soon as possible, hopefully within a month of identifying the interview list.

Follow up your telephone conversation with a letter or e-mail, confirming the date, time and expected length of the interview.

- **To Visit or Not to Visit?**

In order to get more information about the candidates, you may choose to arrange to visit the congregations where the candidates are currently serving. Sometimes it is not possible to arrange such visits due to distance and costs involved.

Before you decide to make visits there are some ideas you need to think through:

- What is the purpose of the visit?
- What are you looking for?
- Who is going to do the visiting?
- Will everyone go or just a few?
- How will you share the information you gather?
- What if you can't visit all of the candidates?
- Do you go ahead with some visits?
- How will you conduct yourselves during the visit so as not to needlessly upset the congregation?
- Remember, your candidate is still someone else's pastor!

If you do decide to visit, remember that the traditions and customs you observe may reveal more about the pastor's ability to adapt to that congregation than it does about his/her personal preferences. Watch for the pastor's ability to give leadership in spiritual matters, revealed in her/his love for the people and the general feel of the service.

#### **4F. The Interview Process**

A good interview begins with good planning. Where will you hold the interview? If the interview will be conducted by telephone, is a good speakerphone available? Who will ask questions?

What will you ask? Answering these questions will allow you to make the best use of the interview time as well as putting you and your congregation in the best possible light.

An attempt should be made to conduct each interview in the same setting and manner. The Call Committee should be consistent in having the same person lead the interview each time and plan for committee members to ask the same basic questions of each candidate. This will assure that all the bases are covered in each instance once the interview process begins.

In fairness to all candidates and for effective functioning of the committee, that all Call Committee members commit themselves to being present for all interviews.

A crucial aspect of interviewing is the art of listening. To be a good listener, several things are important:

1. The person being interviewed has invested time and effort to be interviewed. Therefore, he/she is worthy of the committee's respect, interest, and undivided attention.
2. The committee gives the person time to formulate thoughtful answers.
3. Building on what the person has said, the interviewer asks questions that pick up on information already shared in the interview. This indicates that you are listening.
4. The committee listens for key words and phrases, making certain that they are understood by all.
5. The interviewers listen for main ideas, not just facts and figures. They should ask themselves, "What is this person telling us?"
6. Interviewers ask clarifying questions to make certain they really understand what the person is saying. If a response is not clear, the committee should ask for it to be clarified. Doing so does not reflect ignorance but demonstrates that the committee is truly interested and trying to understand what the person is attempting to communicate.

As the Call Committee prepares its questions, it recalls the top leadership needs identified in the Congregational Profile. These leadership needs are used to form an outline for the upcoming interview with the candidate. The committee selects eight to ten questions that will shape the primary part of the interview. The committee is flexible in realizing that a give-and-take conversation will not necessarily allow you to ask the questions in predictable order.

In formulating questions, carefully avoid those which can be answered with a response of "yes" or "no." For example, the questioner should not ask, "Do you think you are effective in your ministry to youth?" The candidate will almost surely answer, "Yes." Rather, ask, "Describe how you minister to youth. Give us some examples of how you have worked effectively with youth in your present or former parish."

Here is a list of sample questions for you to consider:

1. What events led you to prepare for ordained ministry?
2. How do you describe yourself theologically?
3. How do you nurture yourself spiritually?
4. How do you care for yourself physically, emotionally, socially?

5. What personal traits and gifts do you have that make it possible for you to be effective as a pastor?
6. What books have you read recently that have made an impression on you?
7. How do you prepare a sermon? What do you try to achieve in your preaching?
8. Describe the areas of pastoral ministry you enjoy the most.
9. Describe the areas of pastoral ministry you enjoy the least.
10. What role do you see yourself fulfilling in relating to committees?
11. Tell us about your philosophy and style of pastoral visitation.
12. Discuss your expectations concerning catechetical instruction.
13. Share your thoughts regarding the worship life of a congregation.
14. In what ways do you participate in the community? In the synod?
15. What areas of involvement in your last/current parish gave you personal satisfaction?
16. What is it about our congregation that interests and challenges you?
17. How do you determine what priorities to put on the tasks you must do?
18. Can you tell us about a time when you had to deal with a difficult parishioner regarding a complaint? How did you handle the situation?
19. Give us an example of how you motivate and enable your parishioners to be effective in ministry.

An effective interview is a two-way conversation, with the candidate also bringing questions and concerns. Allow time and opportunity for the candidate to ask questions and be prepared to address them.

Here are some questions that may be asked of you as a committee:

1. What is the focus of your congregation? Describe your mission.
2. What is the role of staff and what is the role of the laity in your congregation?
3. How many people are involved in leadership roles? How are lay people involved in worship?
4. How are decisions made in your congregation?
5. What long and short term goals has the congregation adopted? When was the last time an in depth self study was conducted?
6. What is the congregation's commitment to support of and partnership with the synod and the ELCIC?
7. How does the congregation respond to change and how are changes made?
8. What part should family members of staff play in the congregation?
9. Why did the previous pastor leave?
10. Are there skeletons in the closet that I should know about in considering the call here?
11. How many hours a week do you expect the pastor to work in the parish?

## **❑ Conducting the Interview**

Following brief, informal introductions, a member of the Call Committee may start with a prayer.



Following the prayer, each member of the Call Committee should introduce him or herself to the candidate. The committee member chosen to direct the interview should then outline the anticipated procedure for the interview, indicating the time allotted for the interview, the “question and answer” format, and an invitation to the candidate to ask questions of the Call Committee.

Before the committee’s preselected questions are posed, it is appropriate for the Call Committee Chairperson to ask the candidate to share something about him or herself. The invitation, “Tell us something about yourself,” is purposefully general and open ended. A time limit of from five to seven minutes is suggested for this opening self introduction by the candidate.

The formal questioning now begins, remembering that it is very important that the same questions are asked of each candidate for later comparison. Questions may be assigned to various members of the Call Committee, thereby assuring that all present actively participate.

If the response received from the candidate seems incomplete or unclear, the person asking the question may pose a follow up question, asking for elaboration, clarification, or examples. The committee should not expect finely polished, textbook accurate answers to spur-of-the-moment questions. If committee members are not satisfied with the answer, clarification can be requested before the next question is asked. Remember to give time for the candidate to answer the questions adequately. You may get a period of silence after a difficult question. Resist the temptation to jump in or answer for the candidate.

There are some other interview pitfalls you will want to avoid

1. Resist the tendency to rate the candidate as good or bad on the basis of one comment. Remember that people are complicated, never wholly good or bad.
2. You may experience awkwardness at the beginning of your interview process. That is just the reality of learning how to work together as a group. Try not to project that awkwardness on to the candidate.
3. Make every effort to treat each interview independently. Judge each candidate on her/his own merit. Resist making comparisons between candidates before all of the interviewing is completed.
4. Resist being swayed by first impressions. Try to base your opinion of a candidate on the whole interview, not just on the first few minutes.

Call Committee members should take notes during the interview process. These can be helpful references in the coming weeks.

When the committee has completed its list of preselected questions, the committee member leading the interview may invite additional questions. Though the Call Committee is “in charge” of the interview, it is helpful to remember that the interview is intended to be a dialogue. Invite the candidate to ask questions and provide additional comments during the interview.

The committee member leading the interview is responsible for keeping the interview within the anticipated time period previously established. Prolonged interviews are usually

counterproductive. If all is not accomplished in the first interview, a second interview can be scheduled.

In concluding the interview, the candidate may be invited to “answer questions not asked” or make any other comment he or she would like to make. The candidate should then be thanked for participating in the interview, and encouraged to be in contact with a designated member of the Call Committee should there be additional questions which occur to the candidate in the days following the interview. The Call Committee should indicate the approximate time table involved in the completion of the congregation’s call procedures. While the interview is still fresh in the minds of committee members, it might be useful to reconvene the Call Committee for sharing initial impressions.

In the case of a face-to-face meeting, the Call Committee should make arrangements for reimbursing the candidate for any expenses incurred, such as travel costs, overnight accommodations, and meals. If the reimbursement cannot occur at the time of the interview, it should be completed within the following week and an appropriate explanation given to the candidate.

The Call Committee should send a letter of appreciation to each candidate for his/her willingness to be interviewed. This letter may encourage the candidate to address any additional questions or concerns to the Call Committee. Again, a promise of keeping the candidate informed regarding the call process is essential. There is a sample letter for this purpose in the appendix (Appendix 6B).

Remember, confidentiality is extremely important during this interview process.

#### **4G. Making a Decision**

When all the interviews have been completed, the committee engages in the process of selecting a Primary Candidate. Until a Primary Candidate is chosen, candidates and Call Committee’s may be talking with others. Once a Primary Candidate is chosen by the Call Committee, the Bishop is to be notified. The Bishop informs the candidate and the synodical Bishops that this candidate has been chosen as the Primary Candidate and all other call processes are placed on hold until such time as a decision regarding call is reached. There is a possibility that the candidate may choose to withdraw from your call process at this time.

The Congregational Council and the congregation may now be informed of the identity of the Primary Candidate.

Most often, this Primary Candidate is invited for a follow-up interview with the Call Committee as well as an opportunity to meet with the congregation. A “meet-and-greet” with the congregation is an important part of the process, as it gives congregational members an opportunity to visit with the candidate and see how the candidate relates to people in a large group setting. Bear in mind that while first impressions are important they do not tell us everything about the person. The Call Committee should think about ways by which they can

receive feedback from people following a congregational meet-and-greet.

A visit by the Primary Candidate to the congregation also provides opportunity for the candidate to tour the church facility as well as other places in the community. The congregation is to cover the cost of travel, accommodation, meals and other incidental costs. While the candidate might be available to attend worship on Sunday morning, it is recommended that the candidate not be asked to preach. The candidate could be invited to say a few words at the end of the worship service and then be available for conversation during the fellowship time.

Once the Call Committee has determined that the Primary Candidate is indeed the person they wish to recommend to the Congregational Council, then the Call Committee shall vote on that recommendation. A minimum 2/3s majority vote is required. The Bishop is to be informed of this decision.

The chair of the Congregational Council then convenes a meeting of the Congregational Council, at which time the Call Committee presents its recommendation. Providing thorough information about the Candidate, with ample opportunity for dialogue between the Call Committee and the Congregational Council, will enable the Congregational Council to come to a decision regarding the Call Committee's recommendation. The decision to recommend a candidate to the congregation for call must pass by at least a 2/3s majority vote of the Congregational Council. Once again, the Bishop is to be informed of this decision. In consultation with the Bishop, the Congregational Council establishes a date for a special congregational Call meeting, according to the procedures established in the congregation's bylaws.

Note: If the Call Committee is unable to make a decision or feels that it cannot recommend any of the candidates interviewed, it will need to inform the Congregational Council and the Bishop. The process will begin again by establishing a new list of candidates.

#### **4E. Following Up**

Once the Congregational Council has voted to recommend the candidate for call, it is important for the Call Committee to let any other candidates know that you are no longer considering them. You will find a sample letter for this purpose in the appendix (Appendix 6C).

If Council votes to accept your recommendation and the congregation subsequently votes to extend a call, your work as a committee is done!

Please have each committee member fill out the "Call Process Evaluation Form for Call Committees" (Appendix 8) and return them to the Synod Office. You may wish to have a final meeting as a committee to discuss your responses and debrief your call process.

## **SECTION 5: PREPARING FOR THE CALL MEETING**

- 5A. Preparing the Compensation Package
- 5B. The Call Meeting

### **5A. Preparing the Compensation Package**

Once Congregational Council has accepted a recommendation from the Call Committee regarding a candidate for Call, the next step is to prepare the compensation package. A representative of the Congregational Council should contact Synod office and request a copy of the “Memorandum of Compensation.” It is the responsibility of the Congregational Council to prepare the compensation package; it is part of the recommendation that will go to the congregational meeting for a vote.

A copy of the current salary guidelines for the BC Synod is found on the BC Synod website <[www.bcsynod.org](http://www.bcsynod.org)>. These guidelines outline expectations for salary, housing, professional expenses, and benefits. It also is important to consider what level of remuneration the candidate is currently receiving. Once a draft “Memorandum of Compensation” is complete, a representative from the Congregational Council shall be in contact with the Bishop to review the

figures.

The Congregational Council also shall request a digital copy of the Letter of Call from the Synod office. A sample of that document is found in the Appendix of this manual (Appendix 10). There are several places that need to be filled in on the document prior to its printing.

If you have any questions as you go through this process, please do not hesitate to contact the Bishop. Once completed, the compensation worksheet needs to be sent to Synod Office to become part of the call documents.

In the case of calls for new graduates, it is required that they participate in the First Call program of the four Western Canadian ELCIC Synods. This program is designed to help new pastors become successful in their call to ordained ministry. The congregation will need to include the cost of this program in their budget (Appendix 11).

One of the requirements of the call is to cover moving expenses for your new pastor.

## **5B. The Call Meeting**

The Congregational Council will set a date for a special Congregational Call meeting in consultation with the Bishop's Office. Once the date has been set, Council should follow the congregation's Constitution and Bylaws in notifying all eligible voting members of the special congregational meeting. The Bishop or the Bishop's representative will attend the Congregational Call meeting.

In preparation for the Congregational Call Meeting, the Council should review portions of the congregation Constitution and Bylaws relative to the calling of a pastor, including the number of voters required for a quorum and the definition of a voting member.

Unless it is conducted immediately following worship, the special meeting of the congregation to consider the calling of a pastor should begin with a devotional time. The Chair should then establish that a quorum of members is present and ask that this number be recorded in the minutes. The Chair then should invite the Bishop or Bishop's representative to bring a greeting on behalf of the Synod.

A motion to extend a Letter of Call to the pastor, including the Memorandum of Compensation, is then presented to the congregation. Information concerning the proposed candidate and the compensation package is presented to the congregation. A member of the Call Committee is often asked to present this information. A PowerPoint presentation is a helpful tool for making this presentation. It also is important that the leadership needs identified in the Congregational Profile be referred to with respect to the recommended candidate. The congregation should then be invited to ask questions about the proposed candidate and the compensation package.

The vote to call a pastor will be by secret ballot. Proxy or absentee ballots are not permitted. A

two-thirds majority of valid ballots cast is necessary for election. In the case of a call to a multiple-point parish, a two-thirds majority of the total number of ballots cast within the parish, as well as a simple majority of the ballots cast in each individual congregation, is required for election. Scrutineers should be appointed by Council to distribute, collect and count the ballots. The scrutineers should then report the vote outcome to the Chair of the meeting who announces the results to the congregation. Careful minutes must be taken.

Following the meeting, the Bishop or Bishop's representative will complete the "Certification of Call Procedure," a copy of which you will find in the appendix to this manual (Appendix 9).

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Congregational Council Chair should express gratitude to the Call Committee for its work and assistance in the call process. If the Letter of Call has been extended to the pastor, the congregation should be informed that the candidate has 30 days to consider the call and will normally notify the congregation of his/her decision within that time.

At the end of the meeting, representatives of the Congregational Council sign the call documents. These are then returned to Synod Office, signed by the Bishop, and forwarded to the candidate. Following the meeting, the chairperson of the Congregational Council shall phone the candidate in order to inform the candidate of the results of the congregational meeting. It is recommended that a scanned copy of the Letter of Call and compensation package be sent to the candidate, since it takes some time for the official documents to be received by the candidate.

If the required two-thirds majority vote to extend a Letter of Call is not met, the Chair of the meeting declares that the candidate has not been called. It also should be made clear to the congregation that a new Call process begins. It is not just a matter of moving on to "the next person on the list."

When possible, the Congregational Council Chair and Chair of the Call Committee are advised to meet with the Bishop or Bishop's Representative to discuss the failure to elect and to initiate a renewal of the call process. Other Congregational Council members and Call Committee members may be included in this meeting, if desired.

## **SECTION 6: NEW BEGINNINGS**

- 6A. New Beginnings
- 6B. Another Ending
- 6C. Press Release
- 6D. Invite the Community and the Wider Church
- 6E. Helping Your Pastor with the Transition

### **6A. New Beginnings**

The candidate's decision to accept or decline the call will be sent to the congregation via the Congregational Council chair. In accepting, the pastor will be asked to indicate the starting date, usually within two or three months. Acceptance of the Letter of Call is conveyed promptly to the Bishop.

The pastor-elect and the officers of the Congregational Council will agree on arrangements for moving. The congregation is responsible for moving expenses.

The Congregational Council chair and the pastor-elect will consult with the Bishop and the conference Dean to decide upon a date for installation. The Conference Dean normally presides at the installation.

The Congregational Council or a committee appointed for this purpose arranges for welcoming the arriving pastor. Such a group may assist the pastor with relocation needs and possibly plan a celebration and welcoming event. All efforts to greet, welcome and assist the pastor in the start of a new ministry will be appreciated by the new pastor and will help to assure the healthy beginning of a strong, mutual ministry of pastor and people.

### **6B. Another Ending**

The arrival of your new pastor will bring to a close the ministry of your interim pastor. Council should consider ways of thanking your interim pastor for their ministry among you. The kind of thank you will need to reflect the length and amount of service provided, but might include a farewell service, a gift, a letter from Council, a special coffee time at a Council meeting. You may wish to use the service "Rite of Farewell and Godspeed for an Interim Pastor and his/her Family" which you will find in the Appendix. (Appendix 1C)

### **6C. Press Release**

The Congregational Council should consider submitting a press release about the arrival of your new pastor. This is an opportunity to inform the community about a significant event in the life of your congregation. Make sure to include relevant information about your new pastor: educational background, congregations served, major accomplishments, and sometimes

information about the family. It also is an opportunity to describe your congregation. The press release is a tool that helps to create a congregational image in the community.

#### **6D. Invite the Community and the Wider Church**

When you and your new pastor plan the installation service, consider inviting the community, especially representatives from local churches. An invitation to the Installation Service also is sent to congregations and pastors of the BC Synod by the Synod office.

Remember that the time you choose to hold your installation service will make a big difference in who will be able to attend. Sunday morning services usually bring the largest attendance from the congregation but do not allow individuals from other churches to take part.



## APPENDIX

1. Sample Liturgies .....	pages 34-37
A. Rite of Farewell and Godspeed for a Pastor and his/her family	
B. Recognition of an Interim Pastor	
C. Rite of Farewell and Godspeed for an Interim	
2. Guidelines for Congregations Calling an Additional Pastor.....	pages 38-39
3. Guidelines Related to Interim Pastoral Ministry .....	pages 40
4. To Call a Pastor (Devotions for Call Committees).....	pages 41-45
A. We Consider our own Calling	
B. We Consider God’s Gifts	
C. We Consider Congregation and Community Needs	
D. We Consider Ministry Gifts	
E. We Consider the Changing Context/New Opportunities and Challenges	
5. Some Theological Considerations .....	pages 46-47
A. The Call to Ordained Ministry and the Call to a Specific Ministry	
B. The Partnership Between the Whole Church and the Local Church	
C. The Call Process is Unique	
D. The Right Question	
6. Sample Letters .....	pages 48-50
A. Inviting a Candidate for an Interview	
B. Thanking a Candidate for an Interview	
C. Releasing a Candidate after an Interview	
7. Interim Pastoral Ministry Covenant.....	pages 51
8. Call Process Evaluation Form for Call Committees .....	pages 52-54
9. Certification of Call Procedure form .....	page 55
10. Sample Letter of Call .....	pages 56-59
11. First Call Program Outline .....	pages 60-62

## **APPENDIX 1. SAMPLE LITURGIES**

### **APPENDIX 1A. RITE OF FAREWELL AND GODSPEED FOR A PASTOR AND HIS/HER FAMILY**

To be used before the Benediction.

A representative of the congregation comes forward and addresses the congregation.

R: (Pastor) (and his/her family) is/are leaving our congregation. We wish now to bid him/her/them farewell and Godspeed.

The same or another representative of the congregation may make brief comments about the pastor and/or the family, recalling the important events which have been shared with the congregation.

A representative of the congregation then offers this summary statement, affirming the pastoral ministry offered during the pastor's tenure.

R: Pastor (name) , on (date of call) , we called you to be our pastor. We asked you to proclaim God's Word, to baptize new members into the Church of Jesus Christ, to announce God's forgiveness to us, and to preside at our celebration of the Lord's Supper. With the Gospel you have comforted us in times of sickness and trouble and at the death of our loved ones. Sharing our joys and sorrows, you (and your family) have been important to our life together in the Church of Jesus Christ and in our service to this community. God has blessed you in your ministry among us, and God has blessed us through you.

The representative addresses the congregation.

R: Do you, members of \_\_\_\_\_ congregation, release (him/her) from the duties as pastor?

C: We do, with God's help.

R: Do you offer encouragement for (his/her) ministry as it unfolds in (his/her) \_\_\_\_\_ (name of new congregation)

C: We do, with God's help.

The representative addresses the pastor.

R: Do you, Pastor \_\_\_\_\_, release \_\_\_\_\_ (name of congregation pastor is leaving) from turning to you and depending on you?

P: I do, with God's help.

R: Do you offer your encouragement for the continued ministry here?

P: I do, with God's help.

R: Let us pray.

C: Eternal God, we thank you for (pastor's name) , and for our life together in this

congregation and community. As he/she has been a blessing to us, so now send him/her out to be a blessing to others, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. AMEN.

8. Closing farewell comments may be made by the departing pastor and/or family members at this time.

STAND

9. The service continues with the Benediction

## **APPENDIX 1B. RECOGNITION OF AN INTERIM PASTOR**

Rubrics

When set within the liturgy for Holy Communion, this order is used following the Sermon.

The Congregation Council will designate a representative from the congregation to conduct the recognition rite.

SIT

The representative addressed the pastor being recognized.

R: Scriptures: John 20: 21-23; 1 Timothy 4: 12-16

The representative questions the pastor.

R: Pastor \_\_\_\_\_, in the presence of this congregation will you commit yourself to this new trust and responsibility, and promise to discharge your duties in harmony with the Constitution & Bylaws of the Church?

P: I will, and I ask God to help me.

R: Will you love, serve, and pray for these people of God, nourishing them with the Word and the Holy Sacraments, and lead them in the use of the means of grace?

P: I will, and I ask God to help me.

R: Will you lead this people of God in giving faithful witness to the world, and making known the love of God through loving service in this community?

P: I will, and I ask God to help me.

R: Almighty God, who has given you the will to do these things, gives you the power of his Spirit so that you may perform them with strength and compassion.

C: Amen

The representative addresses the congregation.

R: And you, people of God, will you receive this messenger of Jesus Christ, who continues the work of bringing the Gospel of hope and salvation? Will you regard him/her as a servant of Christ and a steward of the mysteries of God?

C: We will.

R: Will you pray for him/her, and honour him/her for his/her work's sake, and in all things strive to live together in the peace and unity of Christ?

C: We will.

The representative addresses the pastor being recognized.

R: By your statements of commitment and the affirmation of this congregation, we welcome you as interim pastor of this congregation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The newly recognized interim pastor continues as presiding minister, leading the congregation in the Creed or prayers

#### **APPENDIX 1C. RITE OF FAREWELL AND GODSPEED FOR AN INTERIM PASTOR AND HIS/HER FAMILY**

Rubrics: When set within the liturgy for Holy Communion, this order is used following the Prayers or the Post Communion Prayer.

SIT A representative of the congregation comes forward and addresses the congregation.

R: Pastor \_\_\_\_\_(and his/her family) are leaving our congregation, having fulfilled the interim ministry needed at this time. We wish now to bid him/her/them farewell and Godspeed.

The same or another representative of the congregation may make brief comments about the pastor and/or the family, recalling the important events which have been shared with the congregation.

A representative of the congregation then offers this summary statement, affirming the pastoral ministry offered during the interim period.

R: Pastor \_\_\_\_\_, on (date interim ministry began) , we engaged you to be our pastor for this interim period in the life of our congregation. We asked you to proclaim God's Word, to baptize new members into the Church of Jesus Christ, to announce God's forgiveness to us, and to preside at our celebration of the Lord's Supper. With the Gospel you have comforted us in times of sickness and trouble and at the death of our loved ones. Sharing our joys and sorrows, you (and your family) have been important to our life together in the Church of Jesus Christ and in our service to this community. God has blessed you with Holy Spirit in fulfilling this interim ministry, and God has blessed us through you.

Let us pray:

Eternal God, we thank you for Pastor \_\_\_\_\_ and for our life together in this congregation and community. As he/she has been a blessing to us, so now send him/her out to be a blessing to others, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. AMEN.

Closing farewell comments may be made by the departing interim pastor and/or family members at this time.

**STAND**        The service continues with the Peace or the Benediction.

## **APPENDIX 2. GUIDELINES FOR CONGREGATIONS CONSIDERING CALLING AN ADDITIONAL PASTOR**

1. Each pastor shall be recognized as an ordained servant of the church.
2. Each pastor shall have the opportunity to exercise a full ministry while at the same time accepting a greater amount of responsibility than the other pastor(s) in designated areas of work.
3. When two or more pastors serve a congregation, the privileges, responsibilities and relationships of each shall be specified in a document drafted initially, and revised as occasion may require, in consultation with the bishop of the synod, and shall include specification of the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor:
  - the leadership role and decision making responsibility; the manner of sharing responsibility for pastoral acts and any perquisite;
  - the types of teaching responsibilities;
  - responsibilities for pastoral calling and pastoral counselling and, in these regards, ways of avoiding duplication of work; and
  - responsibility for committees and organizations, as one way of indicating areas of special emphasis in each pastor's ministry.
5. Possibilities for pastoral staffing relationships are:
  - ❖ **Senior Pastor/Assistant Pastor** – the assistant's job description is mandated by the senior pastor. The assistant pastor's authority is delegated to the senior pastor. The assistant is accountable to the senior pastor. The senior pastor reports to the congregational council. The assistant may be invited to council meetings to provide specific information as requested by council through the senior pastor. The call of the assistant is coterminous with that of the senior pastor.
  - ❖ **Senior Pastor/Associate Pastor(s)** – the work of the ministry of the congregation is defined in clearly stated job descriptions, which are developed by the council in consultation with the senior pastor. There is little overlap in primary work functions, and the areas of overlap are coordinated by the senior pastor. The associate is accountable to the senior pastor. Authority is given to the associate through the job description. Any authority outside of the job description is delegated by the senior pastor. The senior pastor reports to the congregational council on behalf of all the staff. Other staff may be invited to council meetings to provide further detail in their area of specialization, but not to bypass the authority of the senior pastor. The call of the associate may be coterminous with the senior pastor, but not necessarily, depending upon the degree of specialization of the job description and organization of the rest of the congregation's staff.
  - ❖ **Lead Pastor/Associate Pastor(s)** – a team leader with one or more other pastors who have job descriptions defined by the council or in consultation with one another. Team members' responsibilities are negotiated, and the leadership may rotate among team members on a regular or ad hoc basis. Leadership is understood as coordination, not authority. All team members attend council meetings, and each member is directly

responsible to the council. When staff conflict arises, the council or its executive committee or chairperson is given responsibility to resolve the conflict. The call of each team member is independent of the other team members.

- ❖ **Co-Pastors** – two or more pastors working in a team setting with similar job descriptions, who mutually determine their work functions. Both report to council, and conflicts are arbitrated by the council or its executive committee or chairperson. There is no defined leader of the team. Each call is independent of the others.

Note: Each of these pastoral staffing relationships has pluses and minuses. Please consult with the Bishop as you make decisions regarding pastoral staffing relationships.

5. The congregational council shall arrange for periodic review of the pastoral staffing relationships. Assistance for this can be provided through the Synod Office.
6. The pastors shall consult with each other regularly and shall participate periodically together with lay staff members in programs aimed at their development as staff. If serious differences develop, they shall be resolved in consultation either with the congregational council or with the bishop of the synod.

**APPENDIX 3. GUIDELINES RELATED TO INTERIM PASTORAL MINISTRY**

UNDER REVISION



## **APPENDIX 4. TO CALL A PASTOR – DEVOTIONS FOR CALL COMMITTEES**

Five Brief Devotions for Call Committees (and others)  
By The Rev. Ronald Olson, Director of Admissions  
Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota

### **APPENDIX 4A. In Calling a Pastor, We Consider Our Own Calling**

Writing to the Church in Corinth, the Apostle Paul encouraged believers there to consider their own call. As we begin our work as a Call Committee, we may consider the call we all have from God by exploring a few of the following scriptures: Acts 2: 39, Ephesians 4: 4-6, Colossians 3: 15, 1 Timothy 6:12, 1 Peter 3: 9, and 1 John 3: 1.

What a calling – to hope, peace, eternal life! In these verses, all of us are called children of God. Clearly, this is on account of God’s power and wisdom, not our own.

This powerful call is the one that comes to all believers through God’s Word in Holy Baptism. That is why Martin Luther was bold to insist that “the ministry of the Word belongs to all.” And again. “There is no other Word of God than that which is given all Christians to proclaim (from Luther’s Concerning the Ministry, 1523).” Just as all Christians share the promise, so too do we share the task of proclamation. Most of us take up that task in the ministry of daily life. Others we ask to do so publicly for the community so faith can be created and sustained in us. So we see that in the economy of God’s grace the ministry of those called and ordained follows from the call which has come to all who believe.

How do we sense God’s call most clearly? In which aspect of life do we find God’s Word (the promise, the hope, the peace) being “proclaimed” in the strongest way? The Bible even speaks of us as “holy partners in a heavenly calling (Hebrews 3: 1); “what do you think that might mean for daily living?

Prayer

Gracious calling God call on us with your grace again and again. Renew us daily in the peace, hope, and eternal life we have been promised and which we have been called to proclaim. As we work to call a pastor to our congregation may we count on the prayers of all members of this community of faith to uphold us, just as we trust your spirit to guide us. We remember God; you are the One who called us first. Amen

### **APPENDIX 4B. In Calling a Pastor, We Consider God's Gifts**

God’s gracious giving extends to the church too. God has not been content to let the Church fend for itself since Pentecost. On the contrary, the Holy Spirit still enlivens the community of faith. As Bishop April Ulring Larson has said, “What God is interested in is empowering the body of Christ”. God has raised up leaders, gifted ministers and pastors for the Church in all times and places. When the Church has prayed, “Save and defend your

whole Church, purchased with the precious blood of Christ. Give it pastors and ministers filled with your Spirit, and strengthen it through the Word and the Holy Sacraments” God has answered.

Listen to this wonderful scripture: II Peter 1: 3-11. Would any of us, either as individual believers or as members together of a congregation, have any reason to question the trust of those verses? In fact, how have the promises offered there been answered and proved true in your experiences of the life of faith? In the life of our congregation?

We overhear the prayer that scripture offers up for us in Ephesians 3: 14-21. The One who has called us is also at work in us doing far more than we can ask or imagine. That’s an amazing thought!

Luther’s Small Catechism offers his explanations of the third and fourth petitions of the Lord’s Prayer:

“God’s will is done when he strengthens our faith and keeps us firm in his Word as long as we live.” And, “Daily bread includes everything needed for this life, such as food and clothing, home and property, work and income, a devoted family, an orderly community, good government, favourable weather, peace and health, a good name, and true friends and neighbours.”

We daily trust God’s good gifts for our faith and life. Such confidence also belongs to the faith and life of the whole Church.

Prayer:

Gracious giving God give us your help again, just as you have always done. Remind us of your care. Let there be gratitude in our congregation, for all that is needful has been sent and ordained for us already. As we work to call a new pastor to our congregation may we be strengthened for this task with the thought that your providing reaches to every need of your Church. This Call Committee and community of believers is your Church too. Amen.

#### **APPENDIX 4C. In Calling a Pastor, We Consider Congregation and Community Needs**

The Apostle Paul provides a wonderful “snapshot” of life in Christian community in his first Letter to the Thessalonian Church: I Thessalonians 5: 12-24.

This letter of Paul, one of the earliest Christian writings, already shows Paul’s love of lists. Here he checks off some of the characteristics of faithful community life –

- ✓ respect for those who labour among us
- ✓ peace among ourselves
- ✓ help for the weak

- ✓ patience with all
- ✓ always seeking to do good to one another and to all
- ✓ pray without ceasing
- ✓ no quenching of the Spirit
- ✓ holding fast to what is good

That is a lot to be and do in the freedom of the gospel. That is a tall order for a mission congregation. Could this be the first “Congregational Profile?” Our congregation today is also the location of workshop, care and mission, and full of needs in order to give ourselves faithfully to this gospel work. Let’s name some of these community needs.

Is calling a new pastor more a matter of finding someone to meet those needs (do all those things), or of calling one to lead our congregation to do what needs to be done? Are we, as members of our congregation, only objects of ministry, or are we also subjects/agents of ministry?

When we consider congregational “needs”, scripture points us right away to the Christian mission that needs doing in God’s world, and the Gospel work in which we share responsibility.

Fortunately in our need, there are leaders to help us. And we are in the process of calling one of them into our midst.

Prayer:

Gracious sanctifying God thank you for drawing us ever anew into the ministry of the Word. In the community of faith we are empowered for witness and service even as we are ministered to with forgiveness, reconciliation and healing. As we work to call a new pastor to our congregation, show us our neediness – what we need and what needs doing for our life together in Christ. Amen.

#### **APPENDIX 4D. In Calling A Pastor, We Consider Ministry Gifts**

Scripture states that God has only “gifted” children. We have this declaration from Ephesians 4: 7, 11-16. Gifts galore!

God has given ministry gifts to the people of God, to the Church, for the benefit of all. We know, of course, that we do not all have all the gifts. And, some having just the gifts they have given are also called into the Church’s public ministry, into the ministry of Word and Sacrament. The Apostle Paul liked the image of the body, one body with many parts all working together (1 Corinthians 12: 27-30).

We may all sense that we possess certain “gifts for ministry.” It is no accident that some members end up teaching Sunday School year after year – we are not all up to that important work. Some are very comfortable in front of others, leading worship, teaching Bible studies and the like – others are not. We may also sense that our whole congregation, the community taken as one, is gifted too, in a special position or

especially equipped for a particular ministry or mission.

Think of some of the special gifts our former pastors had. Which ones did they have in common? What were their unique gifts for ministry, for leadership in the church? What gifts are going to be most important to our congregation in the years ahead?

Most likely, there is no single gift that will identify our new pastor to us. Nor is there only one who possesses the gifts we seek. There are many gifted leaders in the Church, thank God. So the difficulty of the task at hand is not so much that there are no good candidates or that there is only one pastor who could lead us in mission. Oftentimes, part of the hard work of a Call Committee is

leaving room for the Holy Spirit in the discernment of the many gifts in the candidates God may send. Our task is never simply a matter of “hiring” someone, even the “best” someone we can find, but of allowing God’s Spirit to work in and through us to build up the Church in calling a new pastor. And that can happen, indeed, because God is at work with us in all of this.

Prayer:

Gracious gifting God we are reminded of your gifts in and for all the children of the Church. Call on our gifts now; use us, in service of your whole Church. As we work to call a new pastor to our congregation may your Holy Spirit lead us to discern the gifts we seek and see those gifts clearly in the candidates you are sending to us. In our communications, interviews and meetings with them, may we find ourselves once again who we surely are in Christ Jesus, Stewards of your many gifts. Amen.

#### **APPENDIX 4E. In Calling A Pastor, We Consider the Changing Context/New Opportunities and Challenges**

Listen to Colossians 3: 12-17. We are being changed. That is what the Spirit of Christ is doing with us. There is a marvellous new life prayer in the “Evening Prayer / Vespers” of the ELWB:

Lord God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

We are not the same congregation we were last year, or ten years ago. Times have changed, things have changed, and we have changed since last calling a pastor. What do those changes mean for the calling of a new one? What is different now? How has our community felt the changes?

Changing demographics, aging populations, new immigrants, all these factors make for renewal in mission and ministry too, in service and witness for the community of faith. Let’s take some time to reflect yet again on these new opportunities and challenges as a committee.

Are we more open as a congregation to see the gifts of a candidate we may not have

considered so seriously before? Many congregations have found that to be true, for example, in looking at single candidates, female and older candidates. Pastor Eleanor Hunsberger states the matter boldly. “When God calls you to ministry as a person of colour, a person who is physically challenged, a person who is different, who does not fit the Lutheran mold of this is what a pastor looks like ... somehow the Holy Spirit removes the barriers and people are able to open up to receive such people.” She goes on to say, “We’re helping God, we’re working with the Holy Spirit in this process.”

We refresh ourselves in these words from scripture about our life in the Spirit: Romans 8: 26-30.

We are so called according to God’s purpose. The times may be changing, but we are standing on that solid promise.

Prayer:

Gracious accompanying God, the one in whom we live and move and have our being. Give us a vision of the times of our lives, the new situations in which we live out our faith in Jesus. May we ask anew what it means to be the Church in our time, our place. And as we work to call a new pastor to our congregation may we welcome according to your Spirit the one you are sending to us to lead us into the new days ahead. Amen

## **APPENDIX 5. SOME THEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

What the Augsburg Confessions Says:

“Nobody should publicly teach or preach or administer the sacraments in the church without a regular call. All Christians are called to the ministry of serving God and neighbour, but for the sake of good order in the church certain Christians are specially called to the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament .....God instituted the office of the ministry, that is, provided the Gospel and the sacraments. Through these He gives the Holy Spirit, who works faith, when and where he pleases, and those who hear the Gospel.”

### **APPENDIX 5A. The Call to Ordained Ministry and the Call to a Specific Ministry:**

“It is through the church that God calls certain Christians to ordained ministry. Once that call is discerned, the candidate devotes years to study, training and preparation under the guidance of the whole church through the Bishop and the Candidacy Committee.

In a similar way, it is through the church that God calls ordained ministers to a specific pastorate. Not only does the local congregation participate in the call process, but so does the whole church through the office of the Bishop. Just as the whole church took an active role in the call to ordination, so now the whole church takes an active role in the call to a specific ministry.

This is shown in the fact that once a person is approved for ordination, the candidate must receive and accept a call to a specific ministry in order to be ordained. Ordination may occur in a local church, but it is always ordination by the whole church as shown in the presence of the Bishop at the ordination service.”

### **APPENDIX 5B. The Partnership Between the Whole Church and the Local Church:**

The local church is fully the church, but the local church is not all the church there is. The local church calls a person to be its pastor, but the whole church everywhere has a stake in who is called and how the call process is handled.

The Call Committee, the Congregational Council, and eventually the entire congregation all participate fully in the process. But so does the Bishop, who represents both the interest and the commitment of the whole church in seeing that the pastor called is suited to ministry under the call that is extended.

The Bishop has deep concern for the well being of the congregation’s life and ministry, having reviewed its profile carefully. The Bishop also has deep concern about the person and gifts of the prospective pastor. In the call process the Bishop, the congregation and the prospective pastor work together with the guidance of the Holy Spirit to bring about a

new partnership that is faithful to the Gospel, empowers the local church in its ministry, and strengthens the whole church as people of God.

**APPENDIX 5C. The Call Process is Unique:**

On the basis of our Lutheran theology, a pastor is called to serve a congregation, not hired. The call process is not the same as the hiring process in other parts of society. Any pattern that includes head hunting, résumé shuffling, or high anxiety interviews is highly inappropriate in the calling of a pastor.

Neither is the call process like a beauty contest in which hosts of candidates present themselves to their best advantage so the Call Committee can select one as the winner.

The Lutheran call process is unique because it is an effort to discern what God wants for this local church and for the whole church, in order that the Gospel may be proclaimed and the sacraments administered in accordance with the Gospel.

**APPENDIX 5D. The Right Question:**

Therefore it is not appropriate for a Call Committee to be guided chiefly by such questions as these: Will the congregation like this pastor? Will it approve of the Call Committee's choice of candidates? Will people feel good having this pastor around on Sunday morning? Will this person do for now until a better pastor comes along?

The foremost question for the Call Committee is always whether this is the person God requires this congregation to have as its pastor. Human preferences and personalities never come before the mission to which God calls his church. That is why every meeting of the Call Committee will include prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the work that is being done.

**APPENDIX 6            SAMPLE LETTERS**

**APPENDIX 6A            Sample Letter Inviting a Candidate for an Interview**

Date

Pastor's Name

Address

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

I am writing to invite you to a telephone interview with the Call Committee of \_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church for consideration for call.

You will find enclosed with this letter a copy of our Congregational Profile and our most recent annual report. (I would ask that you would send us a copy of the most recent annual report from the congregation you currently serve.)

I will be contacting you by telephone in the next week in order to arrange a telephone interview time.

We look forward to the interview.

Yours in Christ,

(Your name)

Chair, Call Committee

\_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church

cc: The Rev. \_\_\_\_\_, Bishop BC Synod



**APPENDIX 6B**

**Sample Letter Thanking a Candidate for an Interview**

Date

Name

Address

Dear

I am writing on behalf of the Call Committee of \_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church to thank you for your recent interview with us. It was a pleasure for us to have some time to get to know you.

If you have any additional questions of us, please feel free to contact me directly. (You will find enclosed a cheque to reimburse your expenses surrounding the interview.) We will do our best to keep you informed of the progress we are making in our call process.

Yours in Christ,

(Your name)

Chair, Call Committee

\_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church

cc: The Rev. \_\_\_\_\_, Bishop BC Synod

**APPENDIX 6C      Sample Letter Releasing a Candidate after an Interview**

Date

Name  
Address

Dear

I am writing on behalf of the Call Committee of \_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church to thank you for your interview with us. We enjoyed the opportunity to interview you and explore the possibilities of common ministry.

After prayerful consideration we have decided to recommend another candidate at this time. We will continue to pray for you as you continue to discern God's call for you at this time.

Yours in Christ,

(Your name)  
Chair, Call Committee  
\_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church

cc: The Rev. \_\_\_\_\_, Bishop BC Synod

**APPENDIX 7**

**INTERIM PASTORAL MINISTRY COVENANT  
BRITISH COLUMBIA SYNOD, ELCIC**

---

CLICK ON OR COPY THE FOLLOWING LINKS FOR THE DOCUMENTS BELOW

**EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT INTERIM ORDAINED MINISTER**  
(To be completed by the employer)

<http://elcic.ca/Leadership/documents/InterimMinisterEmploymentAgreement.pdf>

**LETTER OF CERTIFICATION INTERIM ORDAINED MINISTER**  
(To be completed by the Bishop)

<http://elcic.ca/leadership/documents/interimministerletterofcertification.pdf>

**APPENDIX 8.**

**CALL PROCESS EVALUATION FORM FOR CALL COMMITTEE**

The Synod Office wants to be in partnership with congregations during periods of pastoral transition. This form attempts to monitor and elicit feedback on the Call Process from those on the Call Committee. Your time and attention in answering the following questions is coveted. Please distribute copies of this form to each member of the Call Committee. Having completed your forms, you may wish to hold a “debriefing session” to consider each person’s comments. Please forward the completed forms to the Synod Office.

If additional space is needed, please identify question by number and use the back of the page or attach another sheet of paper.

1. Please rate your personal experience with the Call Process on the scale.

Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good
1	2	3	4	5

*(If your rating was Average or below, please comment in question 6 or on the back page.)*

2. Please rate your personal experience with the participation of the Bishop’s Office on the scale.

Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good
1	2	3	4	5

*(If your rating was Average or below, please comment in question 6 or on the back page.)*

3. What did you find most helpful in the Call Process?

---

---

---

---

---

4. What did you find least helpful in the Call Process?

---

---

---

---

---

5. How could the Synod Call Process be improved? (Please be specific.)

---

---

---

---

6. How did your participation in the Call Process affect your understanding of the Church and its Ministry?

---

---

---

---

7. How did your participation in the Call Process affect your involvement in the life of your congregation?

---

---

---

---

8. In your experience, how did the membership in your congregation respond to the Call Process as it was presented to them?

---

---

---

---

9. In your experience, how did your candidate(s) respond to the Call Process?

---

---

---

---

10. What helpful and creative methods and/or materials not included in the “Call Process Manual” did your Call Committee develop and utilize as they led the congregation through the Call Process? (Please share your ideas and/or materials that could be passed on to other Congregational Call Committees.)

---

---

---

---

11. How was the “Call Process Manual” helpful to your Call Committee?

---

---

---

---

---

12. How might the “Call Process Manual” be improved?

---

---

---

---

If you desire to remain anonymous, do not sign your name, but identifying your congregation by name is helpful.

Name: (if desired) \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional comments may be added on this sheet, the backside of this form or on a separate sheet.

APPENDIX 9

**Certification of Call Procedure**

Name of Congregation: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of call meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

The undersigned certifies to the Bishop that these procedures were properly followed in issuing the attached Letter of Call:

- \_\_\_ The Call Committee and the Congregational Council each voted to recommend the pastor to the congregation by at least a 2/3s majority vote.
- \_\_\_ The Call Meeting of the congregation was convened in accordance with the constitutional requirements for such a meeting relative to advance notice and purpose of the meeting.
- \_\_\_ The number of voting members at the meeting was confirmed. (Only voting members in good standing and present at the meeting are eligible to vote – proxy votes are not permitted.)
- \_\_\_ There was a quorum of voting members at the Call Meeting.
- \_\_\_ Opportunity for full discussion was made available to voting members in attendance.
- \_\_\_ The Letter of Call, together with the Memorandum of Compensation, was extended by at least a 2/3 majority of voting members present and voting at the Call Meeting.
- \_\_\_ Changes, if any, to the written-in portions were passed by a majority of those present and voting, and initialed by the Officers.
- \_\_\_ The official ELCIC Letter of Call, along with the Memorandum of Compensation, was completed and signed by several members of church council. These documents are to be submitted to the Bishop for signature.

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX 10 – LETTER OF CALL

*Letter of Call*

To \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ*

Mindful of the apostolic admonition that all things be done decently and in order, and in accordance with the practice of the Lutheran church to provide qualified Persons of good report and in whom the fruits of the Spirit are manifest, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada recognizes the office of the ministry established by our Lord and seeks through it to give the spiritual leadership and pastoral care necessary for the establishment, growth, development, and welfare of Christ's holy Church. Accordingly,

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

voted to call you as \_\_\_\_\_ according to the following terms:



## **That You...**

- (1) Preach the Word, administer the Sacraments and conduct public worship in harmony with the faith and practices of the church;
- (2) Baptize, confirm and marry in accordance with the teaching of the church and with the laws of the province or territory, visit the sick and distressed and bury the dead;
- (3) Inculcate piety in individual and family life and provide pastoral leadership to all schools and auxiliary organizations of the congregation;
- (4) Install members of the Congregational Council and, with the council, administer discipline;
- (5) Seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel and strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, at home and abroad;
- (6) Encourage the members to be generous in support of the ministry of the congregation, the synod and the church;
- (7) Keep accurate membership records including baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials and communicants, and submit a report of such statistics annually to the secretary of the synod on forms provided by the church. The parish records shall be kept in a separate book which shall remain the property of the congregation;
- (8) Commend members who move to the pastoral care of the parish in which their new home is located;
- (9) Participate in the Pension and Benefits Plan of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada;
- (10) \_\_\_\_\_
- (11) \_\_\_\_\_

**That We...**

- (1) Receive you as our pastor and accord you the love, the respect, the good will, and the co-operation due your office, and uphold you in prayer
  
- (2) Promise you our faithful assistance in the work to which you are called
  
- (3) Support the work of the congregation, the synod and the Church
  
- (4) Contribute to the Pension and Benefits Plan according to the regulations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada
  
- (5) Reimburse you for expenses, not otherwise provided for, incurred in attending conventions and other official meetings at which your attendance is required
  
- (6) Participate in the Continuing Education Plan of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada
  
- (7) Provide you a residence kept in good repair, including utilities   
**OR**  
Pay you a housing allowance
  
- (8) Pay you salary and benefits, to be reviewed annually, as provided for in the enclosed Memorandum of Compensation, Professional Expenses and Benefits
  
- (9) Pay your moving expenses (including travel) as follows:

---

---

May the Holy Spirit guide you in the consideration of this call.

Name

Office

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Certified by

\_\_\_\_\_ Bishop

We earnestly request you to acknowledge immediately receipt of this Letter of Call and make your decision known to us within thirty days of official notice.

Correspondence should be addressed to \_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Copies of the letters pertaining to the acknowledgement of and decision on this Letter of Call should be provided for the Bishop of the \_\_\_\_\_ Synod.

## APPENDIX 11.

### First Call Program

The Western Synod's *First Call Program* involves rostered ministers in the ELCIC (ordained and diaconal) who are part of an intentional continuing education program for a three year period during their first call to ministry serving in the western synods of the ELCIC. When congregations/agencies call a rostered minister to serve in their congregation/agency, they make a commitment to fund his/her participation in the *First Call Program*. The fee for this three-year program is \$1500 per year and covers the participant's travel, registration, accommodations and meal expenses.

Program goals relating to ministerial identity, skills and context include:

- Successfully retaining newly rostered leaders in ministry
- developing habits of sustainability i.e. preventing burnout
- addressing expectations for ministry of rostered leaders, congregations and judicatory bodies
- recognition of public vs. private roles for rostered leaders
- strengthening collegial relationships among rostered leaders i.e. support, accountability and respect
- foster appreciation for continuing education
- sharpening skills for congregational development
- reinforcing skills in equipping the saints in leadership for ministry
- gaining tools for and recognizing importance of understanding the context of ministry
- strengthening faith commitments of members
- live into a larger understanding of their work and life as one of continuous teaching and learning
- develop opportunities to provide leadership in their local community
- develop skills for being practitioners in their community & seeing themselves as part of a larger community of practice
- build relationships that enable members to learn from each other
- understanding the context in which they are practitioners of ministry
- creating strong, well-resourced communities
- facilitate the development of accurate congregation mission profiles
- address expectations for ministry of rostered leaders, congregations and judicatory bodies (proactively)
- strengthening collegial relationships among rostered leaders
- learning to identify, prepare, and support first call congregations recognizing signature ministries
- learning to identify, prepare, and support first call congregations

General components of the process include mentorship (all years), annual western synod events, spiritual direction, theological reflection, structured reading, peer-to-peer (cohort)

learning, development of an education plan including goal setting and accountability in the context of Mutual Ministry Committee, as well as evaluation by stakeholders.

Specific components of the *First Call Program* include:

- 25 hours in an annual western synods sponsored learning event to be funded by the calling congregation or agency. Course offerings will include training in practical ministry subjects such as evangelism, stewardship and conflict management, as well as historical/biblical theology and doctrinal theology.
- A further 25 hours in a learning event or events in an area appropriate to the call of the pastor/lay diaconal minister. It is recommended that the REFLECTIONS AND DIRECTIONS DOCUMENT in the Mutual Ministry Handbook be used to determine appropriate areas of study. The expectation is that the rostered minister should sit down with their Mutual Ministry Committee and take a look at what areas of ministry could be strengthen through continuing education and then look for appropriate opportunities to address those needs. The costs for continuing education are the rostered minister's responsibility. It is appropriate to use your continuing education allowance (ELCIC-CEP) and book allowance included in the rostered minister's Letter of Call, compensation package.
- An intentional mentoring relationship with a pastor/lay diaconal minister. Documents supporting this relationship include GUIDELINES FOR MENTORS AND CANDIDATES; SUGGESTED CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF A MENTOR; AND SAMPLE MENTORING AGREEMENT. At the end of the three year mentoring process, it is expected that the rostered minister will be available to mentor a new rostered minister through the process.
- Generation and completion of a reading list which would encompass the three disciplines of historical/biblical theology, doctrinal theology and practical theology. It is anticipated that this reading list would be developed using the REFLECTIONS AND DIRECTIONS document from the mutual ministry handbook or a comparable tool. This list should be generated after working through the REFLECTIONS AND DIRECTIONS DOCUMENT. It is fair to expect that the candidate would read 5 books over the course of one year.
- Completion of a *First Call Reporting Form* which needs to be completed and returned to the synod bishop by May 1 of each year. The form provides a template for outlining continuing education plans, mentoring, and the reading list.

## First Call Learning Module

### Year One

#### **Leadership Skills**

- leadership vs. management
- coaching/mentoring skills
- leader as generator & communicator of vision/ as change agent
- communication skills

#### **Vocational Skills:**

- time management
- personal spiritual development tools for rostered leaders
- self-care—physical, emotional, mental self-care

#### **Spiritual Leadership Skills:**

- foundational skills for the nurture of discipleship in congregational life:
  - teaching prayer
  - fostering biblical literacy
  - equipping for evangelism
  - catechesis
  - spiritual direction

#### **Ecclesiology/Organizational Behavior**

- context tools
- tools for study of congregational structure & culture
- NCD as an evaluative tool
- congregational life cycle
- redevelopment/mission development tools

### Year Two:

#### **Congregation-based Community Organizing (CBCO) Skills**

- one-to-one relational meetings
- effective meetings
- power, self-interest, WAI vs. WAISB
- One on One and house meetings as group process for cultivating leadership & missional identity

#### **Purpose, Mission, Guiding Principles**

- purpose & mission statements & the difference between them
- Transforming Congregations methodology for generating statements

### Year Three:

#### **Missional Identity:**

- Mission events

#### **Stewardship**

- stewardship practicum

#### **Discernment of Call:**

- evaluation of present call
- change in call- transitions