The Michigan District
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

CALLING A SOLE/SENIOR PASTOR

A Manual for Congregations Engaged in the Call Process

Michigan District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod | 3773 Geddes Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105-3098
Phone: 734.665.3791 | Toll Free: 888.225.2111 | Fax: 734.665.0255 | michigandistrict.org | facebook.com/milcms | x.com/milcms

People of Hope…Vigorously Making Known the Love of Christ

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A Word to Congregational Lay Leaders

What an exciting and vital venture lies ahead of you! Few actions of a congregation impact its future direction and viability more extensively than the calling of a pastor.

Those of you who provide leadership to the congregations calling a pastor know how challenging and potentially complicated this task is. Often, there are diverse, even competing, ideas of the type of pastor who would be best for the congregation. Plus, there is the haunting question of how long the process might take.

Still, the venture you are embarking on is full of splendid opportunities. There is much to learn about your church body (local, district, and national Synod), about the people who will consult with you, about the wonderful pastors serving the Lord and His Church, and those fellow members who will serve with you on the group that guides the Call process.

One thing is sure. The calling of your pastor will necessitate extensive patience, a commitment to thoroughness and shared responsibility, ongoing collaboration, and a keen capacity to listen. You have been given a special responsibility in your congregation's life, and it deserves the best that you have to offer.

As you continue to convene, we urge you to commit yourself to four practices:

1. Seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit throughout the process;
2. Communicate openly and regularly with others within the congregation and District;
3. Remember to pray unceasingly for all who are involved and impacted by your actions;
4. Remain vigilant for the congregation's interests and the pastor you aspire to add to the congregation's staff.

Finally, in all that you do and say, we commend to your thoughtful reflection the words St. Paul shared with fellow believers at Philippi …

> *"… then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others" (Philippians 2:2–4).*

During all phases of the calling process, remember to …
• Pray continually for the Lord's guidance • Not rush the process, but be patient • Ask for insights and suggestions from as many people as you can • Read as much as you can about adding staff • Consult with other churches like yours who have gone through a similar process • Follow up, follow up, follow up, especially on needed information • Keep the church's interests in mind • Keep your congregation's mission before everyone • Thank God for progress in the calling process • Be honest at all times • Communicate regularly and openly with the congregation and district

Calling A Pastor
A Manual for Congregations Engaged in the Call Process

A regular agenda item at every meeting of the district president and circuit visitors is the process by which congregations elect a pastor through the Holy Spirit's leading. Our purpose in giving this matter so much attention is to make it a process through which congregations can lay hold of God's vision for their mission in their context and call the pastor whom the Lord has selected to lead them.

This manual is one more attempt to live up to that opportunity. In the next pages you will find resources in the following areas:

- Understanding the Pastoral Vacancy Support System – Section I
- Enriching Your Understanding of the Pastoral Call and the Relationship between Pastor and People – Section II
- Understanding the Process of Calling of a Pastor – Section III
- Understanding Terms That You Will Hear and Use – Section IV
- Multiple appendices that provide additional information, samples of various related materials, and more

This call manual is updated periodically – the latest version is available online from the Michigan District website at www.michigandistrict.org. You'll also see that many of the samples and other information in the Appendices points to the online repository. This enables us to continue to make good resources available and accessible.

Because we have committed ourselves to making the calling process an opportunity rather than a burden, feel free to share any suggestions you have. As your district president, I will appreciate hearing from you.

Rev. David A. Davis

Michigan District, LCMS

[10/1/22]

Section I
The Pastoral Vacancy Support System

When a congregation experiences the departure of its pastor, some people will come alongside the congregation to provide help and share their experience through the process. Look especially to the following:

The District President

The district president assists the congregation with three special responsibilities:

- Ensures the continuation of the Gospel Ministry of Word and Sacrament;
- Assists in the process by which the congregation calls a pastor;
- Provides the congregation with a list of pastors for call consideration (call list).

Your district president is:

Rev. David A. Davis
david.davis@michigandistrict.org

The District Facilitator

District facilitators (DFs) are experienced District staff members deployed to assist ministry staff and lay leaders to strengthen and support local churches and schools. Specifically, the district facilitator helps in these ways:

- Assists the congregation with the decision to utilize pulpit supply, a vacancy pastor, or a transitional interim pastor during the vacancy;
- Assists the congregation in selecting a vacancy pastor or transitional interim if they choose to have one;
- Actively assists the congregation in identifying resources and addressing issues.
- Helps the call committee to assess the needs and opportunities of the parish;
- Attends meetings of the church council and/or voters' assembly as requested by the congregation, the district president, or as the circuit visitor deems necessary.

Your congregation's district facilitator is:

The Staff of the Michigan District

Usually, there are individuals in the District office from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Anyone can take your message.

Your principal contact at the office is:

Laurie Brown
Executive Assistant to the President
Direct Phone Number: 734.665.4248
Email Address: laurie.brown@michigandistrict.org

For information regarding Transitional Interim Ministry (see description below):

Rev. Dr. Robert Kasper
robert.kasper@michigandistrict.org
734.213.3230

The office of the Michigan District is located at:

3773 Geddes Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48166-3098
888.225.2111
734.665.3791

The Circuit Visitor

The circuit visitor has been elected by the congregations of your circuit and by the convention of the Michigan District. He will serve as the district president's on-the-scene representative and is available to advise you. Congregations are encouraged to reimburse him for his expenses. Specifically, the circuit visitor helps in these ways:

- Secures assistance for preaching, Holy Communion, confirmation instruction, weddings, funerals, Baptisms, visitation, etc.;
- Attends meetings related to the calling of a pastor as the representative of the district president;
- Attends meetings of the church council and/or voters' assembly as requested by the congregation, the district president, or as deemed necessary;
- Assists in the arrival and installation of the new pastor.

Contact the Michigan District office for contact information for your circuit visitor.

The Regional Vice President

The District also elects the regional vice president in the convention. He will support the circuit visitor and assist in the circuit visitor's absence. Contact the Michigan District office for contact information for your regional vice president.

The Vacancy Pastor

- The vacancy pastor provides pastoral services during the pastoral vacancy. He is responsible for worship services, visitation, and catechism instruction as agreed upon with the congregation. He usually attends voters'/church council meetings and any other activities that the congregation deems necessary, as available and as determined by mutual agreement with the congregation.
- Specific responsibilities and compensation of the vacancy pastor should be clearly defined by the congregation and agreed to, in writing, by the congregation and the vacancy pastor. A sample agreement between a congregation and a vacancy pastor is shown in Appendix A.
- The circuit visitor may be the vacancy pastor, or another area pastor may be chosen.
- A vacancy pastor is rarely placed on the congregation's call list, except under extraordinary circumstances, in consultation with the district president.

The Transitional Interim Minister

A Transitional Interim Minister is a specially trained pastor designed to help a congregation intentionally, for a specific period, to address and resolve specific concerns or to help in a transitional period following a particular need experienced by the congregation. A Transitional Interim Minister also performs all the responsibilities of a vacancy pastor and is not to be placed on the congregation's call list. The circuit visitor and office of the president will assist in determining the need and availability of a Transitional Interim Minister. For more information on transitional interim ministry, visit lcmstim.org.

The Congregations and Pastors of Your Circuit

The congregations and pastors of your circuit will be happy to assist you if you encounter an emergency and cannot contact your circuit visitor or the district president for immediate assistance. **If immediate pastoral help is needed, please contact the interim/vacancy pastor or circuit visitor first.** Contact the Michigan District office for the contact information for Circuit pastors.

Section II
The Pastoral Call and The Relationship Between Pastor and People
A Biblical Perspective

God calls His people through His Word to fellowship with Him and to serve in the world with the good news of the Gospel and the good life of Christian love.

> *You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9).*
>
> *We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:13–14).*
>
> *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us—that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ (1 John 1:1–3).*

After sincere consideration and prayer, God's people in a specific place call a pastor from the larger Christian family to inspire and equip them for their ministry. The pastor's focus of service is the faithful proclamation of the Gospel and administration of the Sacraments, loving acts of pastoral care, exemplary Christian life, and concentrated efforts for the church's growth.

> *Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off (Acts 13:1–3).*
>
> *And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11–12).*
>
> *Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:1–4).*
>
> *... appoint elders in every town as I directed you—if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound[d] doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it (Titus 1:5b–9).*

The pastor, professionally competent and, above all, a man of faith, recognizes his call by the congregation to be a call from God and conducts his ministry with care, humility, and dedication.

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ (Romans 1:1–6).

Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood (Acts 20:28).

...even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28).

So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory (1 Peter 5:1–4).

Members of the congregation hold their pastor in high regard as God's servant, a gift of divine grace. They offer him and his family the best of their love, prayers, and support.

This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God (1 Corinthians 4:1).

In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel (1 Corinthians 9:14).

Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves his wages" (1 Timothy 5:17–18).

Pastor and people consider each other as joyful partners in the Gospel, each contributing to God's work according to their calling, ability, and measure of faith.

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now (Philippians 1:1–5).

Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches (Galatians 6:6).

Section III
The Process of Calling a Pastor

From time to time, in the life of every congregation, there arises the need to call a pastor, whether for a sole pastor, assistant, associate, senior, or other pastoral role. Be comforted that yours is not the first parish to do so. The district president, district facilitator, circuit visitor, and other District staff are here to help you through the calling process.

The help and wisdom available to you as you begin this process has been memorialized as part of the bylaws of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod:

> ***Bylaw 2.5 Calling Ministers of Religion by Congregations***
>
> 2.5.1 Congregations, school associations, agencies, auxiliaries, and recognized service organizations of the Synod shall seek the counsel of the appropriate district presidents when calling ordained or commissioned ministers.
> *(as amended at the 2019 convention)*

The following process is a highly recommended call procedure, developed and refined over time within the Michigan District based on the experience of many hundreds of calling congregations. Confident in the Lord's presence and provision, commit to following through the process prayerfully and deliberately. Take the time and do the sometimes challenging work of earnestly seeking the Lord's will for your congregation. Go thoughtfully ... go carefully ... and go in prayer.

When Your Pastor Leaves: A Significant Time of Transition

The period of transition in pastoral leadership can be very emotional and anxious. But, under the Spirit's guidance and blessing, this time can be a growing and strengthening experience for your congregation as it reflects on the past and plans for its future mission and ministry. **Therefore deliberate, earnest, ongoing prayer is not optional—it is essential.**

Change is taking place. We are often not comfortable with change, but we know it happens. The transition typically has three phases:

1. **An ending** – letting go, saying "good-bye" in positive and healthy ways.
2. **A transition period** – an in-between time, a time for conducting self-study, assessing your future in mission, and creativity in lay leadership.
3. **A new beginning** – welcoming the new pastor and a new phase in ministry.

However, the opportunity for blessing does not minimize the emotions and feelings of loss that ordinarily occur when a pastor leaves. Most members in a congregation are surprised when their pastor decides to accept another call. They may anticipate being all alone and without help that they had counted on. Often there are natural questions:

- Why did our pastor leave?
- Didn't he like us?
- Who will take care of my family if someone dies?
- Who will teach the confirmation class?
- Can we continue as effectively as in the past?
- What about members who seemed deeply attached to the former pastor? Will they continue their association with the congregation now that he is gone?
- What will happen if our pastoral vacancy lasts longer than a year or two? Who will help us?

- What about that practical member who says, “Without Pastor _____ we’re going to splinter apart!”? (No matter how often they say it, it does not have to happen!)

As those and many other questions arise, it is easy to be discouraged and anxious. But remember several great truths! You were all drawn into the relationship of faith by the One who sows the seeds of faith, God Himself. He will never leave you or forsake you. In addition, your brothers and sisters in your circuit and the Michigan District will contribute their influence and effort to bolster you and supply your needs for pastoral service. We will not abandon you and are here to help lead you through the transition.

Also, keep in mind that the decision to accept the call to another congregation, retire, or resign, generates many feelings and memories for your pastor as well. Regardless of the circumstances of his leaving, a grieving process begins for everyone. To help make the departing transition as pleasant as possible, an exit interview with your pastor may be appropriate. This could be conducted by the board of elders or other groups assigned to this responsibility. Such an interview can provide information valuable in future planning and help determine the gifts, abilities, and strengths of the pastor to be called to fill the pastoral office.

You probably have no real idea how strong you are as a congregation. Just because you haven’t done certain things does not mean that you can’t! Trust the One who has never failed you and begin the calling process confident that this process, surrounded by God’s gracious care, will help you discover your next pastor as you move into the beautiful future God has in mind for your congregation.

Call Process Steps

See Appendix B for a Call Process Checklist based on these steps.
NOTE: If your congregation's constitution and/or bylaws stipulate a specific call procedure different from what is provided below, follow what is stated in your constitution/bylaws.

Additionally, note that the following guidelines are written with the understanding that most congregations are served by one pastor. They may need to be modified to meet the needs of calling a pastor to a multi-staff position.

Step 1: Notify the District President, the district facilitator, the regional vice president, and the circuit visitor as soon as it is known that a pastoral vacancy will or has occurred

As soon as your pastor has announced his acceptance of a call away from your congregation or announces his retirement with a date set, contact your district facilitator (DF). The chairperson of the congregation or board of elders usually sends this letter. The pastor who has accepted a call should remove himself from the administrative and program functions of the congregation as quicky as is possible. In the case of retirement, the transition away from parish planning can be more gradual, but within 45 days of the pastor's final day, the pastor should no longer be involved in the decision chain of the congregation. His focus should be on pastoral care and preaching.

If a pastor has received and accepted a call to another congregation, he should:

a) Notify his current district president and the district president of the calling congregation (if different) of his decision.

b) Ask the congregation for a peaceful release in writing from his call.

Step 2: Manage the Details of Closing the Pastoral-Congregational Relationship: Exit Interview, Future Relationship, Financial Issues, Appropriate Farewell

Exit Interview: The pastor who is leaving or retiring should not take an active role in choosing his successor or directing the call committee in its work. However, it is wise to seek his opinions on the strengths and challenges of the congregation before he leaves. The district facilitator can assist you in developing an appropriate exit interview with the departing pastor.

Future Relationship: When a pastor departs or retires from a congregation, it is essential to clarify his relationship with the congregation and his successor. In the future, it is proper and beneficial that the departing pastor is not involved in the congregation's ongoing mission and ministry.

Financial Issues: When a pastor leaves, there are often economic issues that need to be addressed. Is there a down payment loan or another loan that must be repaid? What conditions are attached to that? Is the pastor due to compensation for vacation time? Has an orderly transition been planned so that health benefits will be covered by either the old or the new congregation during the transitional period? In some instances, when a pastor is not moving to a retirement or immediately to another call, a transitional compensation package is appropriate. Generosity is encouraged concerning the transitional care of the pastor, mainly where no other support system exists. These and other financial issues need to be discussed and acted upon before the pastor leaves.

Plan an Appropriate Farewell: When your pastor leaves, an appropriate farewell event or service of thanksgiving can give people the opportunity to express their appreciation of his ministry and to wish him and his family God's blessings as they leave. In the case of a pastor retiring, a more elaborate farewell may be planned, and a special service of thanksgiving in recognition of his years of ministry is very appropriate.

Communication: Clear, open, and frequent communication is critical during this time. The Barna Group provides important perspective and research on this topic. Search or click the following: "Communication Is Key in Periods of Pastoral Transition."

Step 3: Select a Transitional Interim Minister, Vacancy Pastor or Pulpit Supply Pastor, define your expectations of his work, and negotiate his compensation package

As soon as the district president, district facilitator, and circuit visitor are notified that your congregation will need a pastor, the district facilitator will arrange a meeting with your congregation's governing board or council. Consult your congregation's constitution to see if it designates a group to handle this responsibility.

The district facilitator will work through the congregation chairperson to arrange a meeting with your congregation, the circuit visitor, and/or the regional vice president. This meeting may be held before your present pastor leaves depending on the circumstance. This meeting will outline procedures, provide background information, and discuss your concerns.

There should be a discussion concerning pastoral services and procedures during the pastoral vacancy at the meeting. The district facilitator will describe three levels of interim pastoral services and compensation for any pastoral vacancy services. Briefly stated, the three levels are as follows:

- **Transitional Interim Minister (Divine Call)**: It may be recommended that your congregation consider calling a Transitional Interim Minister. Increasingly, congregations are deciding to intentionally delay the calling of the permanent pastor and take time for self-study, healing following conflict, review of mission, etc. In these instances, the services of a Transitional Interim Minister are strongly recommended. These are pastors who have special training and certification that enables them to provide full-time pastoral services during a vacancy and skilled guidance in effectively working through the transition, including guiding you through your self-study period and developing a congregational and pastoral profile, and more. A Transitional Interim Minister is arranged through the district president and is divinely called according to the manner specified in your congregation's constitution and bylaws**. It is District policy that the person who serves as Transitional Interim Minister is not to be considered** a candidate for the call. For more information on transitional interim ministry, visit lcmstim.org.
- **Vacancy Pastor**: This is a pastor engaged by the congregation to regularly provide pastoral services and coverage for worship. That basis may be either full-time or part-time, depending upon congregational needs. The Vacancy Pastor is often active or retired in your area. In writing, specific responsibilities and compensation for the vacancy pastor should be clearly defined. Your circuit visitor will assist you by recommending Vacancy Pastors and appropriate compensation guidelines. It is District policy that the person who serves as Vacancy Pastor is not to be considered a candidate for the call. See Appendix A for a sample vacancy pastor agreement.
- **Pulpit Supply Pastor**: The Pulpit Supply Pastor confines his ministry to preaching at services or performing other minimal functions. The Pulpit Supply Pastor is not to be involved in church governance. Frequently more than one supply pastor serves the congregation, meaning that several pastors may take turns in a preaching schedule. *This is not recommended under ordinary circumstances. This arrangement has many drawbacks* since it does not always provide the stability of a regular pastoral presence. At times, however, this is the only option available. It is also used as a temporary option to fill the pulpit until the congregation arranges for ongoing pastoral services during the vacancy. Your circuit visitor will assist you by recommending Pulpit Supply Pastors and appropriate compensation guidelines. It is District policy that the person who serves as Pulpit Supply Pastor is not to be considered a candidate for the call.

It is also important to note that any pastor serving your congregation must be in good standing on the clergy roster of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Congregations calling a non-LCMS pastor can be expelled from Synod.

Step 4: Establish a Congregational Calling Process (unless the process is already specified in your constitution) and a call committee

Please review your congregation's current constitution and bylaws as you prepare to enter the calling process. Some congregations have the calling process clearly outlined in their constitution or bylaws. If so, follow the process already approved by your congregation. If you have questions, contact your district facilitator. If your congregation does not have procedures outlined in the bylaws or constitution, determine whether there should be a special call committee or whether the board of elders or the church council will serve in this capacity. Appendix C is a sample resolution that can help address this critical matter.

As part of the process, your congregation will want to answer specific questions like, "When will meetings be held?", "Who may vote at call meetings?" and the like. After the first meeting, the process for calling will be offered to the appropriate congregational group for adoption. Procedurally, from that time on, the congregation should be guided by whatever process its governing body has chosen. Spiritually, the congregation should be consistently and continually praying for God's divine guidance through the whole calling process. Calling a pastor is not to be taken lightly but must be approached with the deepest level of spiritual conviction and fervor.

Assembling your call committee is one of the essential parts of your call process—be very prayerful for and mindful of whom you select. It is strongly recommended that the call committee be representative of the congregation (male, female, variety of years in membership, seniors, youth, attendees from different services, etc.). The call committee should not be comprised of a majority of the present leadership, generally speaking. Ordained and commissioned workers may serve on the call committee provided they are not potential candidates and present no conflict of interest, and whose service will not impede your goal of representing your congregation as a whole. Your call committee should not include more than 9 or 10 people.

Be very wary of those who eagerly volunteer to serve on the call committee—they may have a hidden agenda that is not conducive to thoroughly and prayerfully going through the process. See Appendix D for tips on forming your call committee, along with a sample questionnaire for prospective call committee members and sample communications related to forming the call committee.

Step 5: Complete a Self-Study of your congregation's life, ministry and mission, and a pastoral profile

Congregations typically desire to move toward calling a new pastor as quickly as possible**. It is critical that the call process move according to God's timing, is bathed in prayer, and not rushed.** An essential part of this deliberate, thorough effort is conducting a self-study process, which should be initiated at the beginning of the pastoral vacancy. The congregational and pastoral profile has three beneficial uses:

1. To help the congregation understand itself and its unique call to ministry. (You should not call for nominations from the congregation until you have completed the congregational and pastoral profile and discussed it with the congregation.)
2. To help the district president understand the needs and opportunities of the congregation.
3. To help the pastor you have called evaluate how well his gifts match the congregation's needs and opportunities.

At a minimum, the congregation must complete the "Congregational Profile" form – see Appendix E. **This profile MUST be completed before calling for congregational nominations (see Step 6) and before sending your list of nominees to the district president. This information is critical to enable the district**

president to match potential candidates with the gifts, skills, and attributes needed by your congregation.

Taking the time to do a thorough, honest self-study will benefit your congregation in multiple ways as you conduct the call process. Your self-study should include the following elements:

- **Your Context** – Gain a current understanding of the neighborhood, community demographics, and context in which your congregation has been called to do ministry.

  An incredible, **free** tool to help you quickly access powerful information on your context is the Church Extension Fund's (CEF) **MissionInSite**. MissionInsite's PeopleView System™ uniquely integrates information about your congregants with demographic data to determine the best opportunities for advancing your ministry. To gain access to this information, simply contact your district facilitator.

- **Your Congregation** – Discover and come to a mutual understanding or affirmation of your congregation's history, mission, vision, values, strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities. Congregational surveys, staff and leadership interviews, congregational focus groups, and other methods are important to compile this information and ensure your congregation is heard. Ensure your study includes your school ministries, including preschool, K-8 school, etc. Also, provide information about any preschools, schools, or other entities to whom you rent space or facilities.

- **Pastoral Profile** – As part of your survey, interview, and focus group efforts, collect congregational feedback on the attributes needed in your next pastor. Themes will emerge from this data that will lead to a pastoral profile, essentially a description of the type of pastor your congregation needs to fill the role as defined in a position description effectively.

  All people, including pastors, have been uniquely created and gifted by God. In addition, each congregation has a unique context in which it does ministry, along with a unique body of members. Thus, it is essential to align congregational needs with a pastor with the specific gifts, talents, abilities, and specialized skills your congregation requires.

  Does your congregation have an assistant or associate pastor who is a potential candidate for a lead/senior pastor role? If so, there are particular steps to take to preserve congregational unity and treat the pastor sensitively and appropriately. See Appendix F for more information.

Consult your district facilitator for advice and assistance with your congregational self-study. Once completed, the district facilitator will share the self-study results with the congregation. The self-study results should be submitted to the District office before the district president compiles the call list.

Step 6: Receive the Results of the Congregational Self-Study and pastoral profile from the district facilitator.

The congregational members are encouraged to participate in a self-study survey to identify key trends and ministry values impacting the congregation's growth. The congregational inventory can be completed using a Scantron instrument or online.

The district facilitator will present the results of the Congregational inventory and the pastoral profile to the congregation in an open informational forum. The forum aims to provide the congregation with an information-based profile of the most suitable candidate for the call. The district facilitator will prepare a summary report for distribution to the congregation. The membership will use the report to identify and nominate (Step 7) pastoral candidates who are most likely to possess the proper leadership style, ministry values, and skills to work well within the congregation's culture and community environment.

Step 7: Receive Congregational Nominations for the Office of Pastor

Unless otherwise stipulated in the constitution or bylaws of your congregation, all communicant members of your congregation have the right to nominate any pastor in good standing on the clergy roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. See Appendix G for a sample announcement for nominations. See Appendix H for a sample nomination form. (Other members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod may also submit nominations for your congregation to the district president.) It is to be noted that though a pastor may be "in good standing on the clergy roster of the LCMS," there may be circumstances known to the district president's office that would preclude a pastor's name from a call list. For example, pastors who have served less than three years in their present parish are generally not considered viable candidates.

Establish a deadline for the congregation to submit nominations. Two weeks is recommended to allow members to submit names. The district president's office will begin the call list process after all nominations are received. After the nomination period ends, send a letter to each person who submitted a nomination acknowledging receipt and include the name(s) of the nominees they submitted. A sample email can be found under Appendix H.

IMPORTANT - *Please be sure to instruct the congregation members to* ***nominate only those pastors who possess the qualifications and experience necessary to be the pastor of your congregation, as determined by the Pastoral Profile and the Congregational Self-Study.*** *This means that nominations from the members of your congregation should be neither requested nor received until* ***AFTER*** *Step 6 of this process has been completed, and the results of the self-study have been shared with the congregation.*

Nominated pastors must be in good standing on the clergy roster of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Congregations calling a non-LCMS pastor can be expelled from Synod.

Step 8: Forward all Nominee Names Received to the District President's Office

Upon receipt of the list of nominees, the Pastoral Profile, and the Congregation's Self-Study, the district president will request a Pastor's Information Form (PIF) from each out-of-district nominee's district president. This form, completed by the nominee's district president, is returned to the Michigan District president and contains basic information about age, education, previous service areas, family size, and health. The Michigan District president will also request a copy of the Self-Evaluation Tool (SET) completed by each nominee. The information described above will typically already be available to the Michigan District president's office for nominees currently in the Michigan District. The district president will generally add additional qualified candidates to the congregation's call list.

NOTE: Any congregation wishing to consider calling a candidate from an LCMS seminary or church body in fellowship with the LCMS **must** contact the district president for special instructions.

Step 9: Receive Your Call Packet from The District

After evaluating all the nominees with the assistance of other District staff, the district president will prepare the call list. This process can take from 4-6 weeks. Several factors determine the length of time, many over which the district president has little or no control, e.g., the length of time it takes to receive information about pastors from other Districts or how long a pastor takes to update his PIF (Personal Information Form) or SET (Self-Evaluation Tool) if it is out of date.

After the district president has reviewed it, the call list and the PIF, SET, and current congregation statistics for each nominee will be sent to the congregation through the circuit visitor. In some cases, the circuit visitor may direct the call list to be sent directly to the congregation*. (The PIF and SET documents are confidential and for the call committee's use ONLY. They are NOT to be duplicated for the whole congregation or distributed electronically. After a pastor accepts a call to fill the vacancy, all printed copies should be collected and destroyed. The call committee is encouraged to write and publish a summary in preparation for the call meeting. See Appendix I for a sample summary.*

As mentioned before, men who have served less than three years in their present parish are not considered viable candidates. Candidates may not be placed on the call list submitted to your congregation for several reasons, ranging from personal problems to service in a critical ministry to personal desire, to evaluated inability to serve the unique ministry of your area, etc. Remember that the district president may remove a name from the list submitted by the congregation for a variety of reasons, including the congregation's needs, the status of the pastor involved, and the needs of the Church at large. The district president will be happy to communicate such matters to the call committee and provide information on individual candidates at the committee's request. Such information does not break confidence nor defame the man involved.

It is not acceptable to place the name of the Pulpit Supply, Vacancy, or Transitional Interim Minister on the call list, although congregations sometimes feel the desire to nominate him, for two reasons:

1. Being the pastor in that place gives this pastor a distinct advantage over a lesser-known pastor and/or one who lives at a greater distance, even though he may be very suited for the call.
2. A vacancy pastor might treat the congregation differently if he thought he would be a candidate for their pastor than if he knew he would not be. Men currently serving in your circuit or a neighboring circuit will ordinarily not be placed on your congregation's call list.

When the district president returns a list of candidates for the Office of the Ministry to a congregation, the first reaction may be disappointment at the modest amount of information available. Every congregation desires substantial facts to aid them in consideration of candidates. Answers to questions such as *"Can we be sure he will understand our needs?"* or *"Can we be sure our congregation will like his style of ministry and preaching?"* are simply impossible to provide. Pre-call interviews and site visits are recommended to give you more of that type of insight and understanding. See Appendix M for more information on handling interviews and site visits.

As a call list is prepared, factors considered include:

1. The candidate has met the academic preparation standards and successfully responded to the minimum emotional, psychological, and theological standards of his training, vicarage, and practice as a pastor before his ordination and initial placement.
2. The candidate's health, the number and ages of his family members, his length of service in each congregation, how many congregations he has served and for how long, are part of the information you receive and may wish to evaluate.
3. Each pastor on your list has been evaluated by their current district president in several categories. It is assumed that most of our pastors have more than average capability in all categories. Whether in character, ability, or theology, significant strengths or weaknesses will be included in his district president's report to your district president. The notes will include comments on family health, personal abilities, and potential for different kinds of ministry in a variety of places. Your district president evaluates this and, where it is appropriate, sends it on to you through your circuit visitor. We are cautious that, at this level, information that might be injurious to the candidate's good name is not broadcast. However, sincere, and honest attempts are made to ensure that all important information is always given to the congregation.
4. Non-Michigan District candidates on your call list have been contacted by their District by phone to determine whether anything is going on in his life or ministry that would make it very difficult for him to seriously consider saying 'yes' to your call if the Lord leads you to extend it to him. The call committee may wish to phone Michigan District candidates to ask the same question.
5. All candidates on the call list have had an opportunity to complete the Self-Evaluation Tool (SET), a comprehensive questionnaire enabling the communication of a man's pastoral and theological beliefs and practices. Your call committee will receive and should thoroughly study the SET of each candidate for whom it is available, understanding that some men elect not to

complete the SET for various reasons. Likewise, some pastors may or may not agree to meet personality or other evaluation tools when asked. A decision not to participate should not be used to prejudge a candidate.

Step 10: Prayerfully Evaluate Candidates and Keep Your Congregation Informed

When the call packet is received from the District office, ask the congregation to pray for the call committee as they evaluate the candidates towards the ultimate goal of narrowing the list to three or four names. Provide the congregation with a preview of the following steps you're taking towards bringing the congregation together to vote on whom to call as your pastor. However, the complete list of names of candidates **mustn't be disclosed to the congregation at this point.** If terms were disclosed, others in the congregation who are not part of the call committee would likely begin to do their evaluations and make hasty decisions without the information and discussions the committee has. This short-circuits what the call committee has been tasked to do.

Appendix O provides an overview of the evaluation process. Appendix L provides an evaluation grid to be used in evaluating the fit of the candidates against the pastor profile provided by the district facilitator. Your district facilitator is also ready and available to provide consultation in this area. The significant steps in the process are:

1. Determine the list of candidates to contact

Now that the committee can see the information about each candidate, it is helpful to read through the PIF and SET information for each name on the list and identify those that you believe would be an excellent match to your congregation's ministry needs. A thoughtful process involves identifying the most critical ministry traits for your congregation. Write the traits under the headings found on the form in Appendix L. Once the committee has agreed on the key traits, individually, read through the PIF and SET information for each candidate and rate them on the agreed-upon traits. Once done, compare the results and record your findings using the summary form in Appendix L.

2. First contact: availability and willingness

Once the committee has narrowed its list down, it should contact the remaining candidates to verify their availability to consider a call from your congregation. This initial contact aims to determine their availability and willingness to engage with your congregation at this stage in the call process. It is proper to ask, "Is there any reason why you could not, at this time, give serious consideration to a call?" and "Are you willing to be on a call list at this time?"

This initial contact should include a letter and brief information on your congregation. See Appendix J for a sample communication with candidates.

For candidates that respond that they are unavailable or unwilling to participate at this time, send a letter thanking them for their consideration and blessing them in their future ministry.

3. Follow-up: detailed information and scheduling phone/video interviews

For those candidates responding that they are available and willing to participate, provide them with the second packet of detailed information about your congregation. A sample email/letter is available in Appendix K. Provide materials such as your self-study report, history of your congregation, vision/mission/values, descriptions of your governance board, staff position descriptions and profiles, information on your community, relevant web links, etc. Along with these materials, communicate your next steps and timeframe to the candidate. This will include scheduling phone or video interviews with candidates.

4. Interviews

Your district president strongly encourages pre-call interviews. Make use of phone calls, video calls, and face-to-face visits—these are tools available to help seek the Lord's will. Pre-call interviews are

encouraged based on the filling of an apostolic vacancy by the first group of Christian believers as described in Acts 1:15–26 and based on the successful experience of many congregations who have chosen to follow this suggestion.

NOTE: Not every LCMS pastor will consent to a pre-call interview. ***This should not disqualify the candidate from consideration.***

The goal of the phone/video interviews is to give you a fuller picture of the candidate, how he communicates and personally relates, his experience and perspective on ministry, success, challenges, etc., all leading to the development of your shortlist of candidates to bring on to your campus for visits. It's also an opportunity for the candidate to learn more about the congregation, mission, and ministry. See Appendix M for information on the propriety of conducting pre-call interviews and guidelines on conducting interviews.

The call committee must debrief as soon as possible after each interview, discussing their impressions and personal evaluation of the candidate. A written summary of the interview should be prepared and used as a basis for providing information to the congregation about the candidate if they are on your shortlist.

Some congregations have a history of bringing in Senior pastor candidates for pre-call interviews. The on-site visits help the existing staff to get an impression of the candidates and provide the candidates with a better sense of the calling congregation. Over the last five years, fewer congregations have provided on-site visits for pre-called candidates and fewer pastors have wanted to take time away from their ministry for the on-site interview. Appendix N provides a suggested interview and debrief process for call committees that believe the interview will benefit their process. Please note that, if an on-site interview is desired by the call committee, all leading candidates should be provided the opportunity for the on-site visit. Those candidates who cannot participate in the visit should not be penalized for their lack of availability.

5. Develop the slate of candidates to be brought forward to the congregation.

The final step can be intimidating but remember that the Holy Spirit works through His Church. Therefore, be led by the Holy Spirit:

Remember that the historical position of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod on the question of calling pastors is a theological position. We believe God has a pastor for our congregations and that, through the Holy Spirit, He will guide you to find this person for your congregation. For this reason, we always extend calls in the context of prayer for God's guidance. People of God have constantly recognized the limitations of their human abilities to choose ministerial candidates correctly. They have joyfully lived within the boundaries of that limitation, expecting God to act and speak through the minds of His people. Place no artificial barriers in the way of a Spirit-led process! Place no limits on God's power to act!

Use every means available to develop as clear an understanding as possible of each candidate's unique qualifications—yes, the Holy Spirit works through means! But remember that even with computerized facts, psychological tests, in-depth personal interviews, and the like, apparent failures may occur. This at least suggests that these methods are not infallible.

Even a study of past performance leaves much to be desired, for there is no assurance that the same conditions exist that will permit a repetition of that past performance. Nor will you always know the reason why, at another time and place, a man did very well or failed rather miserably. The facts of the past and face-to-face interviews are essential when approached with the prayer that God will speak to and through the congregation in the calling process.

The following thoughts may help guide the committee through this process:

1. Pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

2. Review all pertinent data, particularly the composite assessments gathered from the phone or onsite interviews.

3. Thoroughly discuss the interview of each candidate.

4. Pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

5. Consider how each candidate ranks against the expectations expressed in the position description and other committee concerns.

6. Pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit … you get the idea!

7. Consider the candidates'

    a. Character

    b. Compatibility

    c. Competency

    d. Capacity to further the congregation's mission and vision.

    e. Context fit (A comparison of the pastors' existing ministry context and your congregation's context)

8. Revisit anything particularly significant from each candidate's references.

9. Resist the temptation to take the "easy road" (i.e., which candidate will likely say "yes;" which candidate is closest, which candidate is cheapest, etc.).

10. Review the congregation's constitution, bylaws, and practices regarding presenting a call list.

    a. Will all the viable interviewees be recommended or only the committee's top choice?

    b. If all viable candidates are recommended, will they be ranked by the committee?

11. Assign someone on the committee to prepare a candidate list for presentation to the congregation.

Step 11: Establishment of Compensation and Call Document Preparation

Before the call meeting, the appropriate board or committee should establish the salary and other fiscal compensation, vacation, education benefits, specialized needs and expectations, and a ministry description. Questions of unique duties and other aspects should be considered before the call meeting to apply to the respective candidates. There may be a need to make individual adjustments, but the basic parameters should have been laid out. Appropriate allowances and provisions may be needed for specific areas of tenure and experience, e.g., Pastoral Leadership Institute (PLI), sabbatical, or Post Seminary Applied Learning and Support (PALS). See the District salary guidelines available from www.michigandistrict.org to assist in determining appropriate compensation for church workers. Note

that these are only guidelines for compensation—your particular context and situation may call for adjustments to the compensation package.

Call Documents

Call documents should be completed before the call meeting. Prepare to have all signatories present at the call meeting, i.e., president of the congregation, chair of the call committee, etc. See Appendix P for information on obtaining and completing call documents. You should consider salary, unique duties, and other questions before the call meeting as it applies to the respective candidates. These are matters for discussion and resolution during the vacancy period. The circuit visitor and the congregation should review salary guidelines from the District to provide appropriate salary, housing, benefits, and expense reimbursements for their pastor-elect and his family.

It is strongly recommended that the circuit visitor reviews the call document packet before sending it.

> PLEASE NOTE: All congregations of the LCMS are encouraged to provide their called staff with the Concordia Retirement Plan (CRP), Concordia Disability and Survivor Plan (CDSP), and Concordia Health Plan (CHP) or similar plans if the congregation is not participating in these plans. This is an essential part of caring for those who devote their lives to service in the Church. If your congregation does not currently provide such plans, you may need to address this issue in your budget. Congregations participating in the Concordia CRP and CDSP must generally enroll all workers that work over 20 hours per week for 5 months. Similar, but flexible, rules apply to CHP coverage.
>
> When completing call documents, it is imperative that you properly reflect the benefits your congregation participates in. Concordia Plans (888-927-7526) can provide a list of the specific benefits your congregations is enrolled in.

Step 12: Establish the Date and Procedure for the Call Meeting

Once the call list is received and the process for evaluating each pastor's qualifications is completed, establish a date for a call meeting and make this date known to the congregation, along with the names to be recommended and their biographical information. Please remember that any procedures outlined in your constitution take precedence for assembling your list to bring before the voters at the call meeting.

Appendix R contains helpful guidance for the call committee as they prepare to conduct the call meeting.

The call meeting may be a call service. In the context of worship, the process of calling is significant and uplifting. This service should be developed in consultation with the circuit visitor. See Appendix T for a sample call meeting worship.

Whether you extend a call in the context of a worship service or a meeting, a written ballot should usually be used in the selection with the names of those being considered as clarified by your constitution or agreed upon in Step 3. *Voting by proxy is strongly discouraged. Absentee ballots should not be permitted.* The primary intent is that the activity of balloting should reflect the latest and best information disclosed at the meeting. In addition, balloting takes place within Scripture readings and prayers.

Unless otherwise stipulated by the congregation's constitution, the balloting is complete when one candidate has a majority. If this is not achieved on the first ballot, the candidate with the least votes should be dropped, and a second ballot is taken. If a third ballot is required to complete a majority, the congregation may follow the same procedure and continue until the necessary majority is achieved.

After the balloting, it is recommended that a resolution be requested to make the selection unanimous. The president may say (while not required by our constitution or bylaws), "I would be thrilled to receive a motion to make the ballot unanimous." By the way, the failure of such a resolution would not invalidate the election. It is intended only as a sign of unity and commitment to a common cause and for the called pastor to know the congregation is united in calling him.

Step 13: Immediately Notify the Pastor-Elect of His Selection and Send the Proper Call Documents

The president of the congregation, chair of the call committee, or the circuit visitor should attempt to notify the pastor-elect of his election immediately by phone while the meeting is still in session. If some unforeseen circumstance indicates that the pastor-elect cannot seriously consider the Call, there would still be time to elect another. The following guidelines can assist the congregation in planning the next steps:

1. Telephone the Pastor-elect and convey that a unanimous Call has been extended.
2. Indicate that the Call Documents will be received within a week.
3. Confirm the name and phone number of the contact person from the congregation.
4. Clarify if the candidate wishes to visit the congregation (including the spouse). Many pastors will appreciate the opportunity to visit the congregation once the Call has been issued. The visit provides the pastor and his family a chance to gain greater clarity about the Call, the congregation, and the surrounding community. Appendix S provides a sample agenda for the candidate pastor's visit. Once the Call has been issued, it is common practice for the pastor-elect and his family to be invited for a post-call visit with all expenses paid by the congregation. Keep your pastor-elect in your prayers, and be prepared to do all within your power to assist him in his decision. Your District staff will do the same.
5. If the candidate chooses to visit, determine the dates for a visit at the Pastor-elect's earliest convenience.
6. The congregational contact person should coordinate the pastor-elect's visit plans according to his desires.

Contact the other candidates that did not receive the Call.

a. Convey the committee's appreciation for their willingness to participate in the call process.
b. Indicate that even though they did not receive the Call, they still may be part of an ongoing process.
c. Refrain from explaining why they were not chosen.
d. There is no need to identify who did receive the Call.
e. Explain that they will receive a notification letter if the Call is accepted.
f. Clarify that if the Call is not accepted, a committee member will re-contact each candidate.

Note:

Where others must participate in the call, such as financially assisted parishes, secure the proper congregational signatures on the documents and forward them to the other participants as quickly as possible.

Usually, the pastor-elect should be sent the Call Document and other supporting materials, documents, and information within a day or two. See Appendix Q for a list of recommended documents to be included with the call packet. Scanning and emailing a copy of the completed Call

Documents after the meeting provides the pastor-elect an opportunity to begin deliberating the Call right away but does not eliminate the need to send the hard copies in a timely fashion. In addition, a printed copy of the Call Documents should be sent to the district president.

Negotiating the Call

A natural, beneficial part of the call process is discussion and negotiation between the pastor-elect and the calling congregation. You should maintain an attitude of flexibility, openness, and transparency as you answer questions from the pastor-elect and his wife as they deliberate over the Call. Provide sincere consideration to requests for adjustments to the compensation package, handling of moving expenses, potential dates and timeframes for the transition, etc.

Do not feel that simply because the pastor-elect is raising questions or offering options, he is minimizing the divine nature of the Call. Nor should you feel compelled to fulfill any requests from the pastor-elect simply because he asks. As you engage with the pastor-elect in these discussions, strive for a mutually beneficial arrangement for compensation and other call elements. Working towards this goal helps lay the groundwork for a lasting, fruitful relationship between the congregation and pastor.

Step 14: Notify the District President That the Call Has Been Sent

Even though a copy of the Call documents has been sent to the office of the district president, it's also helpful to phone or email the news to the president's office through your congregation's district facilitator. Keep your pastor-elect in your prayers and be prepared to do all within your power to aid him in his decision. Your district president, regional vice president, and circuit visitor will do the same.

Note for Pastors: It is essential that you communicate well when you have received a call, primarily if you are serving an existing congregation. See Appendix U for information on how best to communicate that you have received a call.

Step 15a: If the Call is Accepted, Plan for Arrival, Installation, and Ongoing Mutual Ministry

When your pastor-elect notifies you of his acceptance of the Call that your congregation has extended, it is essential that you be in touch with him to arrange for such things as moving schedule, transfer of responsibility for benefits plans, and service of installation. Your circuit visitor and District office can help plan these things. The district president must grant authorization for installation.

Installation Service

Your incoming pastor usually is the one who plans the service of installation. They can, however, defer to the congregation. See Appendix V for sample installation and ordination/installation services.

Note that it is highly suggested that the installation words are not printed in the installation service folder. This is to help ensure the congregation's attention is focused on the rite of installation. Contact the President's office at the District for guidance on installation services.

Building a Smooth Transition and a Good Relationship

Begin a process of transition by being flexible and supportive of the new pastor. There are many matters to address in his present ministry. This takes time. Don't wait for them (him, his wife, and family) to ask for assistance; offer it. Issues like schools, finances, banking, grocery stores, doctors, immediate housing, etc., need to be addressed. Show them the Christian love and support that led you to call him to be your pastor.

A good relationship must be built between the pastor and the congregation. This is foundational to a beneficial, effective partnership in your ministry and mission together. See Appendix W for information on building that relationship.

A recommended resource that provides essential guidance for congregations on supporting their church workers is ***Holding Up the Prophet's Hands: Supporting Church Workers*** by Dr. Bruce M. Hartung. It's available from Concordia Publishing House (cph.org). This book presents the challenges church workers

face daily, along with positive and encouraging strategies for how you and your congregation can support your pastor and other church workers. Come alongside your church workers to keep them healthy in body and spirit as they nurture the body of Christ.

Step 15b: In Case the First Pastor You Call Declines

It is entirely possible, as you might realize, that the first pastor you call may, after due consideration, decline to accept the Call. It is essential to inform the circuit visitor, regional vice president, and district president that the Call was declined. The call committee typically then consults with the circuit visitor and district president to form a recommendation about continuing with the current list of candidates or whether to pause in the process to add names to the list. It is also essential for the individual members of your congregation to know that names may be offered to the call committee for consideration and reviewed by the district president up to a stated deadline.

As you communicate to the declining pastor acknowledging his decision, you may wish to ask why they declined. This can be valuable information and perspective for your congregation as you continue the call process.

Step 16: Express Thanks and Appreciation

Once your elected candidate has accepted the Call to become your new pastor and been installed, one person you should remember is your circuit visitor. He does not receive a stipend for his work as circuit visitor unless he serves as vacancy pastor, which involves separate responsibilities and appropriate compensation. Instead, he usually takes time away from his work or his family time to do the extra work of a circuit visitor guiding a congregation through the phases of the calling process. It is appropriate to plan some way of saying thanks to him for his ministry in your midst during the time of your pastoral vacancy.

Section IV Glossary:
Terms You Will Hear and Use

There are terms that you will hear and use during the time of your pastoral vacancy. While most of them are easily understood, it may be helpful to list them here:

Alternate Route

Alternate routes seek to further men's spiritual, academic, and personal development to equip them for the Holy Ministry of Word and Sacraments in the LCMS. Unlike the M.Div. Program, these alternate routes do not lead to academic or professional degrees. Instead, the student who successfully finishes one of these programs receives a certificate indicating that a prescribed course of studies has been completed and a theological diploma that certifies eligibility for ordination.

Assistant Pastor

An ordained pastor who accepts specific responsibilities in a parish under the supervision of another pastor. May be an ***advisory*** delegate at conventions of District or Synod.

Associate Pastor

An ordained pastor who shares equal responsibility in a congregation for the pastoral office with a senior/administrative pastor. He may be a ***voting*** delegate at conventions of District or Synod.

Bi-Vocational Pastor (See also Worker-Priest)

An ordained pastor who serves a congregation part-time and financially supports himself partially or entirely through secular employment.

Call (Divine Call)

The solemn agreement between a pastor and a congregation designates the responsibilities that each undertakes to support the other to fulfill Christ's mission. Because congregations elect pastors to fulfill God's mandate that there be someone to fill the pastoral office, it is appropriate to speak of a "Divine Call" only after asking for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Call/Search Committee

A committee of the congregation, usually appointed by and responsible to the church council or Board of Directors, charged with guiding and guarding the process of calling a pastor. The committee does not make decisions for the congregation but ensures that members have complete information about and access to the decisions rightfully belonging to the entire congregation. The committee will make recommendations, but the congregation issues the call. The constituency and procedure of the call committee are often stipulated in the congregation's bylaws.

Call Documents

Documents which: (1) express the solemn nature of the agreement ready to be instituted between a congregation and a pastor and (2) state that each is ready to assume responsibilities for the good of the other and in support of furthering the mission Christ gives to the congregation.

Calling Congregation

A popular way of describing a congregation without the services of a regularly called pastor. Sometimes people refer to a "vacant" congregation, but that is inaccurate. The congregation, of course, is not "vacant;" only the office of the pastor.

Calling From the Field

Describes the process of issuing a call to a pastor who is serving another congregation or is on "candidate" status.

When a pastor has two calls, one from the congregation he serves and the other from a different congregation or entity of Synod, he must prayerfully consider the challenges and opportunities of each. He asks: "Where does the Lord want me to serve in His church?"

Call List

The list of pastoral candidates, including those nominated by the congregation and recommended by the district president, from which the congregation will elect and call a pastor according to the process prescribed by the congregation's constitution and bylaws and adopted by earlier congregational resolution.

Call Meeting or Call Service

The congregational meeting (service) at which the pastor-elect is chosen according to the process prescribed by the congregation's constitution and bylaws and adopted by earlier congregational resolution.

Typically, the constitution and bylaws require sufficient notice of such a call meeting. This requirement should be faithfully observed.

The circuit visitor should be notified in advance so that he can schedule his attendance at the call meeting. Even if not prescribed by the congregation's bylaws, it is wise for the congregation to have the services of the circuit visitor in such an important meeting.

Candidate/Candidate Status

It is used to designate a pastor in good standing on the clergy roster (ordained minister of the Gospel) of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, currently not serving in a called position in a congregation or other LCMS ministry position, but eligible and available for such a call.

This term is also used for a seminary graduate who is ready for his first call and placement through the process used by the seminary placement officers and the Council of Presidents.

Center for Hispanic Studies (CHS)

Spanish-language pastoral formation program of Concordia Seminary. Students who satisfactorily complete the 18-course curriculum are eligible to be certified, receive a call, and be rostered into the ministerium of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). Students take online courses and week-long intensive courses on the Seminary campus or other approved sites to study under faculty who have experience working with Hispanic/Latino churches and communities.

Chaplain

An ordained pastor who serves an institution (hospital, prison, the military, campus, etc.) rather than a congregation.

Circuit

A local grouping of congregations within one of the Synod's districts. Circuits typically include 8 to 12 congregations.

Circuit Visitor

An ordained pastor who helps to oversee the other pastors within a circuit. The position is best understood as a peer advisor, as the LCMS has traditionally been strongly congregational, as opposed to

hierarchical, in its extra-congregational structure. The district president supervises the circuit visitors and is ultimately responsible for the pastors and congregations.

CMC/Cross-cultural Ministry Center

Cross-cultural Ministry Center (CMC) is committed to forming faithful missionary pastors to initiate and develop culture-crossing ministries. CMC students will simultaneously serve as vicars in local congregations during all four years of their studies.

Close(d) Communion

The terms "close" and "closed" Communion often have multiple understandings of what they mean. At the 1998 St Louis Convention, Resolution 3-28 was adopted and stated the following:

WHEREAS, Both "Close Communion" and "Closed Communion" refer to the same practice which seeks to prevent a profession of confessional unity in faith where there is, in fact, disunity and disagreement; therefore be it
Resolved, That The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in convention clarify that the terms "Close Communion" and "Closed Communion" are synonymous; and be it further *Resolved*, That this understanding be incorporated in future studies and dialog regarding the historic and faithful practice of "Close(d) Communion" within the member churches of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

However, so the district president can understand the nuances of the practice at your congregation and identify candidates that align with your Communion practice, for purposes of this manual, we define these terms as follows:

Close Communion – In addition to members of your congregation, participation in the Lord's Supper is available to those who believe in the Real Presence doctrine for the forgiveness of sins, whereby Jesus' body and blood are present in, with, and under the bread and wine.

Closed Communion – In addition to the above, participation in the Lord's Supper is available only to the members of your congregation.

Colloquy Applicant

To become a colloquy student for the pastoral ministry, a person must meet specific eligibility requirements, such as being a male Christian day school teacher with ten years of experience or a pastor in good standing in another Christian denomination. Such an individual receives seminary training, perhaps somewhat abbreviated, and may then be certified for clergy roster status by the LCMS Colloquy Committee for placement, usually in the District from which he came.

Deferred/Delayed Vicar

The traditional seminary model consists of four years of education. The first two and fourth years are academic on campus, and the third year is a "vicarage" in a parish. Due to age, educational experience, and other factors, a seminarian may be assigned a vicarage at the end of the program rather than after two years. This is referred to as a "deferred/delayed vicar." Though technically serving as a vicar, the placement is usually to a congregation that would seriously consider calling him to be its pastor upon graduation. As with the usual model, the vicar would have an experienced pastor serve as his supervisor during that year.

District President

Elected at District conventions, the district president is the ecclesiastical supervisor over the congregations in his district, which are further subdivided into local circuits. The position of president is roughly analogous to the role of bishop in many church bodies. Still, LCMS doctrine supports a generally congregationalist polity instead of exclusively hierarchical governance.

Divine Call

The solemn agreement between a pastor and a congregation designates the responsibilities that each undertakes to support the other to fulfill Christ's mission. Because congregations elect pastors to fulfill God's mandate that there be someone to fill the pastoral office, it is appropriate to speak of a "Divine Call" only after asking for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

EIIT/Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology

A specialized program of preparation for men who want to serve as pastors and women who wish to serve as deaconesses in immigrant and ethnic minority communities in North America.

Installation

The installation service, or "Rite of Installation," is the event in which the congregation publicly commits the exercise of the Office of the Keys and other desired pastoral functions to the pastor. The festival service of worship also celebrates the pastor's arrival and affirms his acceptance of the Call.

Under the practice and policy of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the district president authorizes the installation of all within the Michigan District. This authorization is sent after the circuit visitor informs the district president of the details of the installation service.

The district president will conduct the Rite of Installation or, if not available, will authorize a pastor to perform the Rite—usually the regional vice president or circuit visitor.

Transitional Interim Minister

A pastor is called/contracted to provide specialized pastoral services during an extended pastoral vacancy. This may be necessitated by conflict within the congregation, between the congregation and its previous pastor, or following the termination of a lengthy pastorate by retirement, resignation, or removal from office.

The congregation selects the Transitional Interim Minister (TIM) with input from the circuit visitor and office of the district president. He usually serves for a limited time (6-24 months) and is not eligible for the call list of the congregation.

For more information on transitional interim ministry, visit lcmstim.org.

M.Div./Master of Divinity

The Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree is the normative route to certification for ordained ministry in congregations and other ministry settings.

Open Communion

Anyone is invited to participate in the Lord's Supper. (This is not the stated position of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.)

Ordained Pastor

A pastor who has been certified for parish ministry by the church-at-large (LCMS through its seminaries) and has been called to the ministry of Word and Sacrament by a congregation or agency of our church.

Ordination

The festival service publicly affirms the church's certification for pastoral ministry. Ordination may occur at the candidate's home congregation with the authorization of the president of the district to which he has been called to serve. Otherwise, ordination takes place in the presence of the congregation to which the candidate has been called. The district president will conduct the Rite of Ordination or, if not available, may authorize the regional vice president, circuit visitor, or another pastor.

Pastor-Elect

The pastor who has received the congregation's Call but who has not yet accepted the Call.

Pastor Emeritus

An ordained pastor who has retired or, for reasons of total and permanent disability, is no longer serving a full-time ministry but is still on the roster of Synod. He continues to be a communicant member of a congregation of Synod. The term is also used as an honorary title given by a congregation to a retired pastor, with or without specific duties. In *The Lutheran Annual*, a retired pastor is identified by "EM" after his name.

Pastoral Office (Office of Public Ministry)

The office of public ministry is divinely established and referred to in Scripture as "shepherd," "elder," or "overseer." Within this office are contained all the functions of the ministry of Word and Sacrament in the church.

Residential Alternate Route

The alternate route is what most closely parallels the M.Div. program. Students in this program study alongside those in the M.Div. program, including studying the New Testament based on its original language, Greek. The key differences from the M.Div. program are a reduced number of courses and Old Testament studies being carried out based on English instead of Hebrew.

Restricted Status

An ordained pastor of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod may or may not be presently serving under a call but is not eligible for another call until his district president removes restricted status.

Seminary Graduate

A pastoral candidate who has recently graduated from the seminary, has been certified by the faculty, and is eligible for placement. The call for a seminary graduate must be submitted through the office of the district president. The deadline is usually around February 15 of each year, although some graduates are also ready for placement at other times during the year. Check with the district president.

Senior Pastor

An ordained pastor serving as the lead and administrative pastor of a congregation, with assistant(s) and associate(s) pastor(s) and other commissioned or contracted staff serving under him.

Sole Pastor

An ordained pastor serving as the only pastor of a congregation.

SMP/Specific Ministry Pastor

A Specific Ministry Pastor is serving in a specific ministry context under the supervision of a general pastor. The SMP seminary training is an alternate route program that enables one whose leadership is raised within a home congregation. (See SMP to GPC)

SMP/Specific Ministry Pastor to GPC (General Pastor Certification)

A certification track explicitly designed for pastors who have completed the SMP program and desire to continue studies to be eligible for the roster as a General Pastor in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Vacancy Pastor

A pastor who agrees to provide pastoral services to a congregation during a vacancy in the pastoral office. (See Section I for more information.)

Specific responsibilities and compensation for the vacancy pastor should be clearly defined. Your circuit visitor is ready to assist you by recommending a pastor and an appropriate compensation guideline. The circuit visitor may be the vacancy pastor, or another area pastor may be chosen. A vacancy pastor is rarely placed on the congregation's call list, except under extraordinary circumstances, in consultation with the district president.

Vicar

A seminary student who serves an internship under the supervision of a called pastor in a congregation for one year to receive required seminary credit. The vicarage is an integral part of seminary training. It is usually the third year of the four-year seminary education. (See "Deferred/Delayed" Vicar above.)

Worker-Priest (See also Bi-Vocational Pastor)

An ordained pastor who serves a congregation part-time and financially supports himself partially or fully through secular employment.

Chart 1

Estimated Timeline for Calling a Pastor

Week	Activity
0	Pastor Announces Call or Date of Retirement
1	1) Notify DF and District President
2	2) Saying goodbye to the pastor
3	3) DF assists in the selection of TIM, Vacancy Pastor, or Pulpit Supply
4	4) Establish calling process
5	5) Complete Self-Study and Pastoral Profile (DF will assist)
6	
7	6) DF presentation of Self-Study
8	7) Receive Congregational nominations for candidates
9	
10	
11	8) District President's office produces a call list of available pastoral candidates
12	11) Establish compensation and prepare Call documents
13	
14	10) Prayerfully evaluate candidates, conduct interviews, keep congregation updated. (CV will assist)
15	
16	
17	
19	12) Announce Call meeting. CV or DF will attend the meeting
19	
20	13) Call documents sent following vote
21	
22	13) Pastor-elect deliberates

Appendix A

Sample Vacancy Pastor Agreement

We, the voting members of (church name)_____Lutheran Church of (city, state) _____, on (date) _____ voted to extend an agreement with Rev. _____, to be our pastor. As such, he is to preach the Word of God in its truth and purity and administer the Sacraments to God's people as given in Scripture. He is also to fulfill other pastoral functions, e.g., teach confirmation classes to both youth and adults, visit the hospitalized and shut-ins, appropriately prepare self and others for leading and conducting Sunday and other special worship services, and fulfill general administrative duties as agreed upon by the pastor and the congregation.

This agreement becomes effective (date) _____and will terminate upon the installation of a newly called pastor or a date agreed upon by both the vacancy pastor and the congregation.

The congregation is to pay Rev. _____ for his services a salary of $_____ per week/month, paid every two weeks/on the 15th and 30th of each month. He will receive _____ per mile for all travel expenses incurred for the services of the congregation. The congregation will provide him with a cell phone/cover his cell phone expenses/pay for all long-distance calls. The congregation may cover other expenses, e.g., medical insurance; conference registration; printer ink and paper costs; mileage; etc., that are incurred as a result of services to this congregation, as per agreed upon between the congregation and the Vacancy Pastor prior to incurring those expenses. Expenses are reimbursed upon adequate documentation to the _____ (Bd. of Elders/Trustees/Treasurer).

If Rev. _____ is unable to fulfill his services for a short or an extended time, he is to inform the Bd. of Elders and seek to find a replacement to serve during that time. The circuit visitor and President's Office would be available to assist in this matter.

[If the vacancy pastor serves another congregation, the following sentence should be added:]
We understand this agreement is entered into with the full knowledge and support of (church name) _____ Lutheran Church of (city, state)_____, which is served on a full- time basis by Rev. _____. We express our thanks to _____ Lutheran Church for allowing their pastor to also serve us.

Appendix B
Call Process Checklist

☐ **Step 1:** Notify the district president, the district facilitator, the regional vice president, and the circuit visitor as soon as a pastoral vacancy occurs

This should be done:

- In writing (Email is sufficient)
- As soon as you become aware of the vacancy
- By the chairperson of the congregation or board of elders

☐ **Step 2:** Manage the details of closing the pastoral-congregational relationship: Exit interview, future relationship, financial issues, appropriate farewell

You should:

- Conduct an exit interview with the pastor
- Establish the departing pastor's future relationship with your congregation
- Resolve any financial issues and ensure a smooth transition and generous care for the pastor
- Plan an appropriate farewell

☐ **Step 3**: Select a Transitional Interim Minister, Vacancy Pastor or Pulpit Supply Pastor; define your expectations of his work and negotiate his compensation package

Work with the district president, circuit visitor, and or regional vice president to:

- Arrange a meeting with your congregation's governing board or council
- Determine how pastoral services, procedures, and compensation will be handled during the vacancy:
    - Transitional Interim Minister (Divine Call)
    - Vacancy Pastor
    - Pulpit Supply Pastor

☐ **Step 4:** Establish a congregational calling process (unless the process is already specified in your constitution) and a call committee

- Determine if your constitution includes a prescribed calling process. If so, it should be followed.
- If no calling process is prescribed, determine whether a special call committee, the board of elders, or church council will serve as the call committee.
- Assemble your call committee, taking care to provide broad representation from the congregation but limiting to no more than 9 or 10 people.

☐ **Step 5:** Complete a self-study of your congregation's life, ministry & mission, and a pastoral profile

- Resist the temptation to rush in calling a new pastor and take the time to do a thorough self-study

- Ensure your study includes:
    - Your context – Analyze your neighborhood, community, and demographics. Use CEF's MissionInSite for robust tools to gather this information.
    - Your Congregation – The district facilitator will assist you in conducting the Congregational Profile survey. In addition, the call committee is encouraged to interview the staff and vital congregational leaders.
    - Pastoral Profile – As you collect congregational feedback on the attributes needed in your next pastor, determine the themes that arise that describe the type of pastor your congregation needs. That will guide the nomination process and aid the District in finding appropriate candidates.
- Complete the "Self-Study Tool for Congregations," at minimum, see Appendix E.
- Consider the circumstances related to an assistant or associate pastor who wants to be considered a lead/senior pastor role. See Appendix F.
- Consult your district facilitator for advice and assistance with your congregational self-study.

☐ **Step 6:** Receive the Congregational self-study and pastoral profile results from the district facilitator.

- The district facilitator will present the results of the Congregational inventory and the pastoral profile to the congregation in an open informational forum.
- The district facilitator will prepare a summary report distributed to the congregation.
- Both documents will be used to identify pastoral candidates who are most likely to possess the proper leadership style, ministry values, and skills to work well within the congregation's culture and community environment.

☐ **Step 7:** Receive Congregational Nominations for the Office of Pastor

- See Appendix H for a nominations form sample.
- Only members of the congregation may nominate a pastor.
- Instruct the congregation only to submit nominees in good standing on the clergy roster of the LCMS and who fit your Congregational and Pastoral Profile.
- Typically only communicant members may submit nominations—refer to your constitution.
- Establish a deadline for the congregation to submit nominations—two weeks is recommended.
- Provide a letter to nominators acknowledging receipt of nominees after the nomination period ends.

☐ **Step 8**: Forward all names received to the district president's office

- Once your nominating period ends, send the list of nominees to the district president's office as soon as possible.
- The district president will perform a search to add qualified candidates to the call list, evaluate nominees, and compile comprehensive information on them to provide to the call committee for evaluation.

☐ **Step 9**: Receive your call packet from the District

- The process for the District to compile a call list for your consideration takes 4-6 weeks.
- The comprehensive candidate information compiled by the District will be delivered to the call committee by the circuit visitor. This information is confidential and for the committee's use ONLY and must NOT be duplicated (except for the call committee) or distributed electronically. Once the call process is completed, the PIF and SET forms that comprise this information will be destroyed.
- If a name is not included on the call list, it is only because the district president has good and sufficient reasons. He will be happy to communicate such matters to the call committee.
- It is not acceptable to place Pulpit Supply, Vacancy, or Transitional Interim Ministers on the call list.

☐ **Step 10**: Prayerfully evaluate candidates and keep your congregation informed

- Request the congregation pray for the call committee as they begin evaluating candidates.
- Conduct evaluation as follows:
    - Complete an initial evaluation based on the information provided and determine which candidates you would consider.
    - Send a letter and some brief information on your congregation to the list of candidates you selected from the initial evaluation, asking for their availability and willingness to engage with you in the call process. Emailing this information in addition to the printed letter is also acceptable.
    - Send detailed information for those wanting to engage, including the report from your self-study, congregational history, vision/mission/values, governance board description, community information, etc.
    - Schedule phone/video interviews. Debrief as soon as possible after the interviews.
    - Determine your "short list" of candidates to bring to your church for in-person interviews.
    - Schedule these visits to include meeting opportunities with leadership and church/school staff, community tours, congregational meet-and-greet, and Q&A forums.
    - After the visits, convene your call committee and discuss which candidate(s) to recommend to the congregation for a vote.
- In all of these matters, earnestly strive to be led by the Holy Spirit. Calls are always extended in the context of prayer for God's guidance.

☐ **Step 11**: Establishment of compensation and Call Document preparation

- Before the call meeting, the appropriate board or committee should establish the compensation package, laying out the basic parameters. Individual adjustments may need to be made based on the situation.
- Elements of the compensation package include salary, vacation, benefits, etc., and should be influenced by education, experience, special skills and expectations, ministry role, etc.
- See michigandistrict.org for salary guidelines.
- Call Documents should be completed before the call meeting (other than the called pastor's information), and reviewed by the circuit visitor. See note on page 22 regarding Concordia Retirement Plan, Concordia Disability & Survivor Plan, and Concordia Health Plan.

☐ **Step 12**: Establish the date and procedure for the call meeting

- Establish a date for the call meeting and publish it to the congregation, along with recommended names and biographical information.
- Follow any procedures outlined in your constitution related to the candidates to bring before the voters or the communication and conduct of the call meeting.
- The call meeting is very meaningful in worship as a call service. See Appendix L for a sample format.
- Use written ballots. Voting by proxy is strongly discouraged, and absentee ballots should not be permitted.
- Balloting is complete when one candidate has a majority. Multiple ballots may be needed to arrive at a majority.
- After balloting, it is recommended that a resolution be requested to make the selection unanimous. This is a sign of unity and commitment to a common cause and for the called pastor to know the congregation is united in contacting him.

☐ **Step 13**: Immediately notify the pastor-elect of his selection and send the proper Call Documents

- Notify the pastor-elect immediately of his election by phone while the meeting is still in session (usually done by the congregational president or circuit visitor).
- Invite the pastor-elect and family for a post-call visit, and be prepared to do all within your power to assist him in his decision. Your District is here to do the same.
- Call documents should be immediately sent to the pastor-elect, with a copy to the District office.
- Notify the individual(s) who were under consideration but not called, thanking them for their patience, openness, and willingness to participate.
- Be open and prepared to engage in discussions and negotiations with the pastor-elect.

☐ **Step 14**: Notify the district president that the call has been sent

- Phone or email the news to the district facilitator and the district president's office.

☐ **Step 15:** The call is accepted or declined

- If the call is accepted, plan for the pastor's arrival, installation, and ongoing mutual ministry.
    - Work with the pastor to plan the Installation Service.
    - Be flexible and supportive as you begin and through the transition. Building a good relationship is critical.
- If the call is declined, consult with the circuit visitor and district president to recommend continuing with the current list of candidates or pausing the process to add names to the list. You may wish to ask the declining pastor the reasons he declined.

☐ **Step 16**: Express thanks and appreciation

- Remember to plan some way to express thanks and appreciation to the circuit visitor and/or the regional vice president for his ministry in your midst during the time of your pastoral vacancy.

Appendix C

Sample Resolution to Establish a Call Process

ESTABLISHING A CONGREGATION'S CALL PROCESS

Whereas, (Name of Congregation) is now without the ministry of a resident pastor and desires to call another; and

Whereas, The procedures for calling a pastor should derive from the excellent experience of other congregations and become a process that unites us as a congregation; therefore, be it

Resolved, That as a congregation, we follow in general the process suggested in the document "The Michigan District Call Manual" as explained to us by the district president, district facilitator, regional vice president, or circuit visitor of the Michigan District; and be it further

Resolved, That we encourage individual congregation members to nominate pastors for consideration; and be it further

Resolved, That we forward the names to the President of the Michigan District along with a Congregational and Pastoral Profile and statement of our expectations for the ministry of a pastor among us, and be it further

Resolved, That we request the district president to review the names submitted by us and respond from that list and other names known to him with a list of candidates for adoption by us as the official list of candidates, and be it further

Resolved, That we urge our call committee to share with each member of the congregation as much pertinent information on each candidate as possible, and be it finally

Resolved, That we invite Circuit Visitor (Name) to conduct a call service during which time, in the setting of appropriate Scripture readings, hymns, praise songs, and prayers, we elect according to the procedures of our Constitution and Bylaws an individual to serve as pastor of this congregation.

Appendix D
Forming Your Call committee

Once the decision has been made to extend a call, it is essential to form a search committee deliberately and prudently. The following suggestions may help you in this significant task:

Forming the Committee

1. Determine whether the congregation's constitution, by-laws, and policy manual guide how the search committee will be formed.
2. Depending upon the direction, or lack of specific direction, provided by the congregational documents, consult with the circuit visitor, or critical lay leaders in the congregation regarding how such search committees have been established in the past.
3. It is recommended that most of the call committee members be persons not currently serving on the congregation council. The committee should intentionally reflect the makeup of the congregation regarding gender, age, ethnic/racial identity, and various segments of the congregation's ministry—worship, youth, seniors, school/preschool families, education, evangelism, missions, etc.
4. Questionnaire

   You may find it helpful to use a questionnaire when selecting possible call committee members (see sample below). In addition to helping you ensure the committee reflects your congregation as much as possible, it helps gather information on previous and current involvement in the congregation, perspectives on congregational health, and the gifts needed in your next pastor.

   Notably, a questionnaire is also helpful in discovering potential hidden agendas. Be very cautious about members who eagerly volunteer to serve on the call committee, as they may have ulterior motives that aren't in alignment with seeking God's will for your congregation. You may also want to interview potential call committee members after receiving questionnaires to further delve into their viewpoints.
5. The committee should include no more than 9 or 10 people.
6. Because of additional demands on the lay president of the congregation council during a pastoral transition, it is recommended that the lay president not be the chair of the call committee. However, it is a good practice to have the president sit on the committee as an ex oficio member and act as a liaison with your governing board or council.
7. Establish to which congregational board or council the search committee is responsible.
8. When forming the committee, decide whether volunteers should be solicited for consideration for committee membership or whether the committee should be constituted by appointment or congregational position.
9. When forming the committee, strive to have individuals who know the congregation well, understand its mission and values, and are well-respected.
10. Define the role of existing staff persons in the search committee process.
11. Use the Calling Process Check List (Appendix B) to outline what is to be done, processes to follow, budget resources, and a timeline by when the candidate slate is to be presented.
12. Identify whether the committee will present to the congregation
    a. all names
    b. only those the committee finds acceptable ranked by preference

c. only those the committee finds acceptable not ranked by preference
d. a single recommendation

13. If the committee chair is not defined by the congregation's constitution or policy manual, decide whether this person is appointed by the appropriate board or council or is chosen by the search committee.
14. Publicize the committee's first meeting, membership, and general task.
15. Regularly share with the congregation the status of the search process, inviting congregational members to talk with committee members with any thoughts or questions.

Prayer

Prayer is a critical activity for the call committee and the entire congregation throughout this process. Call committee members should commit themselves to praying for one another and 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 members' names are made public, requesting special prayers be made on their behalf.

Committee Structure

The Committee leaders and roles include:

- Chair - convenes meetings, sets meeting agendas, primary contact with candidates, single point of contact with the District office, oversees the call process, and keeps it on track.
- Recording Secretary - keeps minutes of call committee meetings for future reference, may be responsible for final preparation of the Call Documents.
- Communications - responsible for written communication between candidates and committee, send copies of correspondence to the District office, may write newsletter articles, notes for bulletins, etc., to keep the congregation informed of the committee's progress.
- Hospitality – manages logistics and volunteers related to meals and activities during meetings, candidate visits, etc.
- Data Analysis – a person or team that leads analysis and findings from the self-study activities, including surveys, interviews, and focus groups.
- Prayer – gathers and manages the call committee prayer list

Salary and Benefits Matters

The congregation's governing board or council will need to provide the call committee salary and benefit possibilities that the congregation can offer. Salary and benefit considerations are not negotiated between the candidate and the call committee. The board or council should authorize funding to the call committee to carry out its responsibilities. This is discussed under "Call Committee Budget" below.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality in the call committee discussions should be agreed upon at the first meeting. It is recommended that your committee members sign a covenant that details the need for confidentiality, prayer, and support for one another. Regarding candidates, discussed issues need to be open and forthright among the committee members; however, these discussions should be kept in confidence among the call committee members.

Confidentiality cannot be overemphasized in the task of calling a pastor. Mention of specific candidates outside the call committee is inappropriate until the committee is ready to recommend

to the congregation's board or council. It is essential to keep all names and both verbal and written information about prospective candidates within the confines of the committee. This means committee members will need to establish ground rules and boundaries with the congregation at large and with those in their household or place of work.

Call Committee Budget

One of the first tasks of the call committee is to establish a budget with the congregational board or council. Although some of these expenses are difficult to determine ahead of time accurately, every effort should be made to set aside the needed finances for the call process. Items to include in the budget:

- Travel/meal expenses for committee members
- Travel/meal expenses for candidate(s)
- Office expenses (i.e., photocopying, data entry, postage, etc.)
- Miscellaneous expenses

  Note: Although the moving expenses for your newly called pastor will not be the responsibility of the call committee, it should be noted to the congregational board or council and your congregation's finance committee that the congregation is responsible for the moving expenses of your new pastor.

Openness vs. Holding Confidence

Reporting regularly to the council and congregation helps keep everyone on the same level of understanding about the process. As noted above, the call committee must keep all verbal and written information about every candidate strictly confidential. However, ***communication is essential! Except for*** confidential materials, there is no such thing as too much information.

Some options to be utilized to keep the members of the congregation informed about the call committee's work and progress include:

- Newsletter articles explaining the call process to the congregation, with follow-up articles each time another stage in the process is reached.
- Notes in the Sunday bulletin announce that the call committee is meeting, reporting progress, communicating what will happen next, etc.
- Periodic talks or announcements by a member of the call committee, even if the report is that there have been no changes since the last word, "Nothing has changed from last week." Remember, there will likely be multiple audiences in your congregation to whom you will need to provide updates at different times, i.e., multiple worship services, those who receive congregational emails and those who don't, etc.

Points to include in communications:

- Description of process
- Status of progress, including what's been done, what you're currently doing, and what happens next
- List of actions taken
- The preferred process for communicating with the members of the call committee.

Planning a comprehensive communications strategy and consistently communicating to the congregation will deliver many benefits, including:

- The congregation will clearly understand the process, including the roles of the circuit visitor, District office, congregation boards or council, call committee, and congregation.
- Clear identification of the members of the call committee.
- Congregation members will clearly understand the proper communication process with the call committee members.

Point of Contact with the District

There must be only one point of contact between the District office/district president and the call committee. This should be the call committee chairperson. A single point of contact ensures precise, efficient lines of communication throughout the process.

The Right Question

It is not appropriate for a call committee to be guided chiefly by these questions: 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 always is whether this is the person God desires 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.

The Significance of Service on a Call Committee

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 allowed them to see how the local church is vitally connected to the whole church. It let them participate in opening a new chapter in the life and ministry of their church as part of the history-long, worldwide Church of Jesus Christ.

Sample Questionnaire for Potential Call Committee Members

Name:
Preferred Email:

Preferred Phone:

1. How long have you been a member of this congregation? Which worship service do you usually attend? How many times per month, on average?
2. In what types of church activities/services have you participated? Any previous call committee experience?
3. What do you think are the three best qualities of this congregation? How would you assess the current health of the congregation?
4. How would you describe this congregation's mission today and for the future? How would you describe the most crucial role of the next pastor and the most important gifts or attributes that person will need?
5. In finding the next pastor, what do you think the primary focus of the call committee should be?

6. What do you think would be your most important contribution(s) in serving on the call committee? Any other comments you'd like to add?

Call Committee Recruitment Letter

(Date)

Dear [name] –

Greetings in Christ Jesus our Lord!

I'm writing to ask you to prayerfully consider serving on the Senior Pastor Call Committee at Sample Lutheran. Our congregation is embarking on a new season of ministry, and I feel that you could bring much value to the committee as we seek first to discern the Lord's will.

Beyond discerning whom the Lord has determined will be our next senior pastor, the call process brings with it the opportunity to undertake an important self-evaluation period. This will help us to clearly see who we are, where the Lord would have us go and the gifts and characteristics needed by the senior pastor who will lead us to that vision. Again, your qualifications, experience, and wisdom would be gifts for the committee in this respect.

The time commitment is somewhat open-ended. I anticipate the minimum timeframe would be a six-month period, but more likely to be nine to twelve months, or potentially longer (as is common based on information from the district office). There will be busier times, such as an approximate three-month period conducting our self-evaluation, as well as less active times as we await and gather names for the call list and profile information from the district. The commitment will include committee meetings that will take place on an approximately monthly basis (likely not every month), and individual or team work outside of meetings. Phone and online interviews with candidates will also take place, and in-person visits as we get to a short list. We will develop a more specific plan as a first task of the committee.

The top qualifications for a call committee member are 1) commitment to prayerful, deliberate seeking of God's will, and 2) open-mindedness and objectivity without assumptions as to what His will is. I believe you can bring both. A short questionnaire sent to you via email will help provide some insight into your experience as well as your thoughts on our congregation currently and in the future. Please complete the questionnaire form (a fillable PDF document) and email to me at (email address).

Once your questionnaire is received, along with those of others we are contacting, the committee will be formed with the goal of congregational cross-representation balanced with a manageable number of members. With these goals in mind, along with potential member availability and willingness to serve, not everyone I'm contacting will be asked to serve.

I very much appreciate your considering serving. God's blessings as you seek His will in this capacity.

In Christ,

(Name)

Chairperson, Senior Pastor Call Committee

Email:

Mobile:

Response Letter to a Person who has Volunteered to be on the Call Committee

(Date)

Dear [name] –

Greetings in Christ Jesus our Lord!

Thank you for expressing interest in serving on the Senior Pastor Call Committee at Sample Lutheran. This correspondence provides information regarding formation of the call committee.

The top qualifications for call committee members include 1) commitment to the call process, 2) faithful involvement in the life of the church, 3) commitment to prayerful, deliberate seeking of God's will, and 4) objectivity and open-mindedness without assumptions as to what His will is. We earnestly seek to clearly hear the Holy Spirit's "still, small voice" during the process.

In addition, another important aspect of the call committee mentioned previously is to provide cross-representation from the congregation balanced with a manageable number of committee members. Pursuant to this goal, a short questionnaire will be emailed to you that enables you to provide information about yourself, your experience, thoughts on our congregation currently and in the future, and future needs. Once your questionnaire has been received, along with those from other potential members, the committee will be formed based on the congregational representation and manageability goals described above—not all of those expressing interest will be asked to serve. Please complete the emailed questionnaire form (a fillable PDF document) and email to me at (email address).

The time commitment is somewhat open-ended. I anticipate the minimum timeframe would be a six-month period, but more likely to be nine to twelve months, or potentially longer (as is common based on information from the district office). There will be busier times, such as an approximate three-month period conducting a self-evaluation of where we have been as a church, where we are, where the Lord would have us go, and the gifts and characteristics gifts and characteristics needed by the senior pastor who will lead us to that vision.

There will also be less active times as we await and gather names for the call list and profile information from the district. The commitment will include committee meetings that will take place on an approximately monthly basis (likely not every month), and individual or team work outside of meetings. Phone and online interviews with candidates will also take place, and in-person visits as we get to a short list. We will develop a more specific plan as a first task of the committee.

God's blessings as you seek His will in this capacity!

In Christ,

(Name)

Chairperson, Senior Pastor Call Committee

Email:

Mobile:

Letter Notifying Those Chosen to Serve on the Call Committee

(Date)

Dear [name] –

Thank you again for considering service on our Senior Pastor Call Committee and submitting the questionnaire. I'm very pleased to inform you that you have been selected to be serve on this committee. I'm humbly grateful to the Lord as He is raising up committee members like you, characterized by prayerful diligence in seeking His will, with wisdom and integrity in faithfully working through this process. I am very excited to serve with you as He leads us into the next season of ministry at Sample Lutheran!

Kickoff Meeting

A kickoff meeting will be scheduled for (date). (district facilitator (DF) or district president) will join us to share his wisdom, best practices, and Scriptural grounding for the call process. I will be in contact via email to work through scheduling.

Call Committee Principles

There are a few foundational principles by which we need to function as a call committee:

1. Diligent Prayer – Please be in consistent, earnest prayer for our church, our committee and that the Lord would lead us through the call process with His blessing and in His time. We will also spend a significant portion of our meeting times in prayer together.

2. Seeking Discernment – Our loving Father has already has selected our next senior pastor, so it is our task to use the gifts He's given us to discern who that is. We'll use His Word, prayer, our intellect, and open hearts to receive what the Spirit wants to reveal to us.

3. Strict Confidentiality – All discussions, deliberations, and meeting matters are to be kept in the strictest confidentiality. We will provide transparent, regular communication to the congregation and church leadership about current status and next steps through "official" channels. Sharing confidential information outside these channels (even with spouses) can lead to misunderstandings, anxiety, distrust, rumors, and more that can impede our work and cause unnecessary stress.

4. Urgency in our work – I thank the Lord you have committed to serve in the midst of your already busy life! With this in mind, we will need to commit that the tasks we have before us are done with urgency and excellence as we intentionally move forward. Making our work a priority as individuals, and as a committee, will help us progress "at all deliberate speed."

Finally, I'm very much looking forward to all of us on the committee growing closer in Christ. And part of that will even include having some fun along the way – yes, that is allowed!

Thanks again for your commitment to serving our Lord and His Church.

In Christ,

(Name)

Chairperson, Senior Pastor Call Committee

Email:

Mobile:

A Letter Notifying Those not Chosen to Serve on the Call Committee

(Date)

Dear [name] –

Thank you again for expressing interest in serving on the Senior Pastor Call Committee and taking the time to complete and submit the questionnaire. The information you provided was very helpful, and I really appreciate your thoughtful responses.

As I mentioned in my initial letter, in seeking to form the committee and provide a cross-section of the congregation, not all of those expressing interest in serving will be asked to serve. Given these goals, your service on the committee will not be required at this time. However, as we go through the call process, you will have an important role as a member of the congregation in several ways:

1) Consistent prayer for the call committee and our church as we go through this process, and that the Lord's will is clearly revealed in finding our next senior pastor.

2) As we undertake our self-study period, responding to requests for your thoughts, ideas, etc. as we capture where we've been, where we are, where the Lord would have us go as a church, and the gifts and characteristics of the man He has selected to lead us there.

3) Submission of potential candidate names you may have in mind when we reach that period of the process.

4) Serving in other capacities related to the call process as those needs arise, including prayer teams, hospitality teams when it's time for on-site candidate interviews, fellowship opportunities, and more.

5) Continuing to be faithful in worship, participation in biblical community as we do life together, serving others at Sample Lutheran and in our local and global community, and being good stewards of the gifts our Lord has given each of us during this interim period.

Sincere thanks again for your willingness to serve our Lord and His Church.

In Christ,

(Name)

Chairperson, Senior Pastor Call Committee

Email:

Mobile:

Appendix E

DOING A SELF-STUDY OF YOUR
CONGREGATION'S LIFE, MINISTRY AND MISSION
MICHIGAN DISTRICT-LCMS

Congregations are encouraged to reflect on their mission and strategy in order to identify their needs and opportunities for ministry. Such self-study is best followed by setting appropriate goals, establishing priorities, and developing plans. Under the leadership of the Spirit of God, these activities will lead congregations toward greater faithfulness and effectiveness in accomplishing God's mission and ministry.

This self-study package contains four tools:

1. **"Toward Measurement of Congregational Health"**
   One person or small committee gathers some basic congregational data. Four diagnostic indicators in the area of worship, Bible study, outreach and service provide clues to congregational health.

2. **"Toward Identifying Needs for Ministry"**
   One person or small committee gathers additional data that helps to provide a clearer picture of the congregation and its priorities.

3. **"The Major Areas of Our Congregation's Life and Ministry"**
   The church council or board of elders may be asked to complete this section.

4. **"Additional Resources"**
   Contact your District Facilitator (DF), he will provide resources in assessing congregational health, pastoral needs, and community demographics and assist in working through this process.

Congregational leaders may then study and interpret the information gathered by these tools, identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the congregation and the needs, and opportunities for ministry. (Share the information and the interpretation with congregation members and receive their responses.)

Your District Facilitator will be the resource person from outside the congregation to help with the study and interpret the information gathered by these tools.

From the study and interpretation, the congregation may then move on to goal setting, prioritizing, and planning for ministry. Your District Facilitator will be helpful in this process.

NOTE: IT IS EXTREMELY HELPFUL FOR THE PASTOR CALLED BY YOUR CONGREGATION TO RECEIVE THESE STUDIES, ALONG WITH THE OFFICIAL CALL DOCUMENTS IN SECTION V.

I. TOWARD MEASUREMENT OF CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH

By the Gospel (in Word and Sacrament), the Holy Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the Holy Christian Church and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In the church He daily and richly forgives all sins to all believers.

This activity of the Holy Spirit is experienced in a congregation of God's called and gathered people. As the Spirit enlightens, sanctifies, and keeps His people by worship and the nurture of the Gospel, He motivates and equips them for His/their ministry of witness and service (to one another and to others).

A healthy congregation is one in which "the Gospel is preached in its purity and the Holy Sacraments are administered according to the Gospel" (Augsburg Confession VII); one in which the people are meaningfully involved in worship, nurture, witness, service and outreach.

The health of a congregation is difficult to measure, since it has to do with worshipping God "in Spirit and in truth" John 4:23 and with nurture/growth in faith and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ toward "mature manhood" and toward "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Ephesians 4:13

However, there are indicators of congregational health that can be measured. It is something like the human body. Such things as body temperature are clues or indicators of health or illness, but do not by themselves prove health nor identify an illness. Similarly, the indicators of congregational health used in this instrument are items of information that give CLUES about the health of a congregation, but do not by themselves prove health nor identify a problem. These indicators require further probing and more thorough interpretation.

Such probing and interpreting usually is most helpful when both the members of the congregation and "outsiders" take a common look at the indicators. In taking this common look, a congregation's indicators should be compared only with that congregation's indicators of other years, not with other congregations' indicators.

On the following chart, the "Tomorrow" columns may be used to project current trends, to set desired goals or may be omitted.

Obtain "Composite Membership" figures by adding "Baptized Members" plus "Average Sunday Worship Attendance" plus "Average Weekly Bible Study Attendance," then dividing this total by 3.

THE HEALTH OF A CONGREGATION
Diagnostic Indicators

	YESTERDAY						TODAY	TOMORROW		
	10 yrs ago	5 yrs ago	4 yrs ago	3 yrs ago	2 yrs ago	1 yr ago	NOW	1 yr from now	2 yrs from now	5 yrs from now
A. Basic Data										
1. Baptized Members (total membership)										
2. Nonconfirmed Members (Baptized Only)										
3. Confirmed Members (Baptized & Confirmed)										
4. Confirmed as % of Baptized										
5. Composite Membership										
B. Three Key Indicators										
1. Average Sunday Worship Attendance										
% of Baptized										
2. Average Weekly Bible Study Attendance										
% of Baptized										
3. Average Weekly Giving per Worship Attendance (divide average weekly contributions by avg. worship attendance)										

II. TOWARD IDENTIFYING NEEDS FOR MINISTRY

1. What is the number of your members in each of the following age categories?

a. 0 – 5 _____	g. 51 – 60 _____
b. 6 – 10 _____	h. 61 – 70 _____
c. 11 – 20 _____	i. 71 – 80 _____
d. 21 – 30 _____	j. 81 – 90 _____
e. 31 – 40 _____	k. 91 –100 _____
f. 41 – 50 _____	l. 100 + _____

2. What is the number of your resident members in each of the following categories?

   a. _____ Husbands and wives living together with children under 18 at home
   b. _____ Husbands and wives living together with no children under 18 living at home
   c. _____ Single Adults
   d. _____ Widows and widowers living alone
   e. _____ One-parent households with children at home
   f. _____ Others

3. What percentage of the congregation's membership is from minority groups? _____%

4. What is the median age of the congregation's membership? (1/2 this age or older and 1/2 this age or younger.)

   Median Age: _____

5. What percentage of the congregation's dollar receipts was given to mission and ministry outside the congregation for each of the last 5 years?

   Last year _____%
   2 years ago _____%
   3 years ago _____%
   4 years ago _____%
   5 years ago _____%

6. What percentage of the giving units accounted for 50% of the dollar receipts from the membership last year? _____%

7. List the names and dates (years of service of pastors who have served this congregation for the past 25 years.)

III. THE MAJOR AREAS OF OUR CONGREGATION'S LIFE AND MINISTRY

WORSHIP

1. The following resources are often used in our worship service(s): (check all that apply)

   ____ Lutheran Service Book ____ Lutheran Worship ____ The Lutheran Hymnal

   ____ LSB Service Builder ____ Creative Worship ____ CCLI Song Select

   Blended/Contemporary:

2. Our children/youth are involved in worship by:

3. Our congregation's primary worship practices: (Check all that apply)

   _____ Traditional _____ Contemporary _____Highly Liturgical _____ Blended

4. These choirs, musical groups and organists are active in our congregation:

5. Lay people in our congregation serve in the following worship roles (check all that apply):

   _____ Acolytes _____ Ushers _____Readers _____ Worship Assistants
   _____ Worship Leaders _____Greeters _____ Altar Guild
   _____ Communion Assistants: ____Men ____Women
   _____ Other (list): _____

7. The percentage of our members who communed at least once in the previous year is:

   Communed Once

   Confirmed Membership x 100 =_____%

8. We use the following media in our worship services:

   _____ Organ _____ Piano
   _____ Guitar _____ Keyboard
   _____ Projection on screens _____ Wireless Microphones
   _____ Wired Microphones _____ Printed Order of Service
   _____ Hymnal _____ Other instruments (list):

   Other media:

9. Other information about our worship style or structure we want our pastor elect to know:

LEADERSHIP ROLES

What leadership roles do you have in your congregation and who serves in those roles (check the roles the congregation has and who may serve)?

____Voting members:	____Men	____Women
____Congregational President:	____Men	____Women
____Elders:	____Men	____Women
____Board Chairs:	____Men	____Women
____Board Members:	____Men	____Women
____Treasurer:	____Men	____Women
____Adult Bible Class Leader	____Men	____Women
____Confirmation Teacher	____Men	____Women
____Other, please specify: _____	____Men	____Women

EVANGELISM AND WORLD MISSIONS

1. Our mission or purpose statement is:

2. We conduct these intentional outreach activities (List activities and number of people involved in each. -- The question to be answered here is: what activities/ministries are our congregation doing that help bring people to Christ?):

Activity:	Number involved:
a._____	_____
b._____	_____
c._____	_____
d._____	_____
e._____	_____

3. Our congregation makes visitors feel welcome at our church by:

4. The number of Adult Confirmation Classes we conduct annually is _____.

   Who teaches these classes? (e.g., pastor(s), DCE, layperson) _____

   The number of adults we confirmed in each of the last four years is:

   _____ Year _____ # of Adults
   _____ Year _____ # of Adults
   _____ Year _____ # of Adults
   _____ Year _____ # of Adults

5. Our congregation is involved in ministry in the:
   _____ community _____state ____nation _____world

   Note ministries here:

CHRISTIAN NURTURE

1. These ministries are active in our congregation (check all that apply):

_____ Sunday School
_____ Adult Bible Class
_____ V.B.S.
_____ Midweek School
_____ Youth Ministry
_____ Christian Day School
_____ Early childhood ministry
_____ Mothers' Day Out
_____ LWML *(or other Women's Ministry)*
_____ LLL *(or other Men's Ministry)*
_____ Small Groups
_____ Young Adult Ministry
_____ Campus Ministry
_____ Stephen Ministry
_____ Other: _____

2. We offer adults these formal programs for Christian growth and/or Bible Study:

3. How many confirmed members are in the congregation? _____

4. How many confirmed members are involved in organized Bible Study? _____

5. How many baptized children—not yet confirmed—are in the congregation? _____

6. How many of these baptized children are involved in Sunday school? _____

FELLOWSHIP

1. We incorporate (assimilate) new members into the fellowship of our congregation by:

2. These fellowship groups are active in our congregation:
(e.g., senior - singles - couples - other)

3. We held these fellowship activities in the last year:

4. These activity groups are active in our congregation:
(e.g., scouting - athletics - quilting - exercise - other)

5. We have had conflicts in our congregation that have influenced our church life and have disrupted unity. These are the events, the timeline and the results:

STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE

1. Members are asked to make a financial and service commitment annually by:

2. We teach Christian stewardship in our congregation by:

3. Our congregation teaches and practices Biblical tithing. ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Our budget is developed by _____ (what group or individual?)

5. The number of giving units (e.g., husband and wife/single adults) we have is:

6. Our budget allocations are shown by these percentages previous year:

Mission	_____%
Education	_____%
Salaries	_____%
Worship	_____%
Facility & Utilities	_____%
Debt	_____%
Youth Ministries	_____%
Care Ministries	_____%

   a. Our day school budget is _____.

   b. Our total current capital indebtedness is $_____.

7. Our Per-Communicant giving:

   Contributions (All Purposes) = $_____ per communicant
   No. of Communicant Members

8. The sources of our income are (Check all that apply):

___Tithes & Offerings	___ Rentals	___ Investment Income
___Endowments	___ Bequests	___ Memorials
___Tuition	___ Fund Raisers	___ Other

9. Our total budget over the past four years: (Attach the previous four years Budgets)

YEAR	BUDGETED	RECEIVED
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

10. Total amount of money sent for missions through District/Synod last year: $_____

11. Total amount of money sent for missions directly to Synod last year: $_____

12. Total amount sent to missions other than District or Synod last year: $_____

13. Our congregation has a parsonage for the pastor. ☐ Yes ☐ No

SERVICE

1. Our congregation helps its members identify and use their talents and gifts by:

2. Our congregation has served the human needs of our community (e.g., poor - homeless - unemployed - disasters) by:

3. Our congregation is organized to meet the physical needs of its members by:

4. These community groups are active in our building:
(e.g., A.A., Bloodmobile, service organizations, other)

*__Please attach a copy of your Constitution and Bylaws.__

Appendix F

Important notes on Assistant/Associate Pastors

Your congregation may have more than one pastor on staff. When the Senior or Lead Pastor role is vacant, there are several important considerations that the call committee and governing body need to be aware of.

First, there may be pressure from the congregation to simply "promote" an Assistant or Associate Pastor into the senior pastor position. Not only is this an inadvisable practice, but it completely discounts the nature of the Divine Call as described above. The calling process is a critical opportunity for the congregation to seek the Holy Spirit's leading, do its due diligence in self-study and discovering its mission and ministry for the next season, and come to a unified, God-pleasing conclusion on who should lead the congregation. While the Assistant or Associate may be whom God has chosen, this can never be a simple assumption. It is always strongly recommended that the congregation undertake the whole call process.

Second, Assistants or Associates should be asked as the call process begins whether they want to be considered for senior pastor role. It is not uncommon at all for Assistants/Associates to decline to be considered for a variety of reasons. Whatever the reasons, this question should be clearly asked, and then it should be clearly communicated to the congregation if they decline consideration.

Finally, if the Assistant or Associate does want to be considered as a candidate, they should be the first candidate the call committee evaluates in comparison to the profile generated out of your self-study. Interviews should take place according to the process you planned for external candidates. If the call committee determines the Assistant or Associate meets all requirements of your profile and feels there is no need to look at other candidates and that he should be recommended to the congregation, the congregation should vote on whether to call the Assistant or Associate.

On the other hand, if the call committee determines that the Assistant or Associate does not align with the stated profile, before proceeding further the Assistant or Associate should be privately informed of the call committee's decision. The Assistant or Associate should then be requested to remove his name from further consideration, and this should be communicated to the congregation.

The sensitive handling of situations as described above is very important to congregational unity and ongoing ministry. Calling a Transitional Interim Minister is a very wise and highly recommended option to help navigate these types of situations. Your circuit visitor, regional vice president, and district president are also important resources to call upon for guidance.

Appendix G

Sample Instructions for Nominations

Sample Lutheran Church and School
Senior Pastor Candidate Nomination Instructions

If there is a potential candidate you know that fits the senior pastor profile as provided by the call committee and whom you would like to nominate for consideration, please follow the instructions below.

PLEASE NOTE: Nominations may be submitted by communicant members of [Sample Lutheran] 18 years of age or older.

1. Complete the attached form, write legibly and provide as much information as possible.
2. Submit the form by depositing it into the box marked "Nomination Forms" in the narthex/lobby of the Sanctuary. You can also mail or drop off your completed form to the church office at the attention of the call committee. Mail to:

   Sample Lutheran Church and School ATTN: Call Committee
   123 Main St.
   Anytown, USA 12345

   The deadline to submit nominations is (time) on (date). No nominations will be accepted after this date.

   Thank you for your prayers and participation in the call process!

Appendix H
Pastoral Candidate Nomination Form

Nomination of Pastor for Consideration by _____ Lutheran Church, [Location] for the Office of Pastor

Michigan District, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

(Members of the congregation who wish to suggest names of pastors to be considered for our call list are asked to complete this form. When it is completed, please give it to an elder or to the chairman of the call committee. It will be forwarded to District President _____. Please include your name at the bottom of the form; otherwise, it cannot be recognized as valid.)

1. Having carefully and prayerfully considered the pastoral needs of our congregation, I wish to nominate the following pastor as a candidate to be considered for a call to our church:

   Name: (Please print): _____
   Address: _____
   (Please check The Lutheran Annual for the correct spelling and address!)

2. I believe this pastor will be good for our congregation for the following reasons:
   _____
   _____
3. Please state whether you know him personally, where, and for how long a time.
   _____
   _____
4. If you do not know him personally, state the source of your information, or the basis on which you are making your nomination:
   _____
   _____

   Jesus said to His disciples, *"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest" (Matthew 9:37–38).*

   We are praying that God will give our congregation another faithful pastor.

Name of person making nomination (Please print): _____ I am a member of _____congregation of_____(city), _____(state) _____

An Email Acknowledging the Nomination

Date:

Dear [name],

Thank you for nominating [insert nominee's name] to be included in the slate of candidates to be considered for our pastoral vacancy. All the nominees will be forwarded to the district president's office for a review process. It is possible that the review process will find that the pastor you nominated is not able to consider a call at this time. If that should occur, the nominee will not be added to the slate of candidates to be interviewed by the call committee. Regardless of the outcome, your participation and prayers in our call process is greatly appreciated.

God's Peace,

Chairman of the Call Committee

Appendix I
Summary List of Candidates

(Provide information to the congregation that illustrates how the pastors you interviewed possess the gifts and attributes described in your pastoral profile. Include a photo of the pastor, or the pastor and his family if available.)

Rev. John Smith

Age: 39
Current Congregation: First Lutheran Church and School, Anytown, CA; 700+ worshippers each Sunday
Role: Senior pastor since 2014. Pastor Smith has served churches in Big City, Florida, and Suburb, AZ, starting new church campuses in Florida and metro Big City.
Education: Concordia Ann Arbor, Concordia Seminary - St Louis
Family: Mary [Jones] Smith (married 2003), 3 children, ages 8-12

Rev. Ned Jones

Age: 50
Current Congregation: Faith Lutheran Church and School, Anytown, TX; 500+ worshippers each Sunday
Role: Senior pastor since 2013.
Education: Concordia, Bronxville /Concordia Theological Seminary-Fort Wayne
Family: Jenny [Brown] Jones (married 1995), 5 children ages 19-25

Rev. Tom Mueller

Age: 42
Current Congregation: Immanuel Lutheran Church and School, Anytown, CA; 700+ worshippers each Sunday
Role: Sole pastor since 2014. Pastor Mueller has served churches in Big City, Florida, and Suburb, AZ, starting new church campuses in Florida and metro Big City.
Education: Concordia Ann Arbor, Concordia Theological Seminary – Fort Wayne
Family: Sarah [Jones] Mueller (married 1997), 1 child, ages 19

Rev. Calvin Hentzle

Age: 54
Current Congregation: Celebration Lutheran Church and School, Anytown, TX; 500+ worshippers each Sunday
Role: Senior pastor since 2009.
Education: Concordia-Austin, TX/Concordia Seminary-St. Louis
Family: Tina [Brown] Hentzle (married 1992), 2 children ages 20, 23

Appendix J

Email First Contact with Potential Pastoral Candidates

[DATE]

Dear Rev. [NAME] –

The congregation of Sample Lutheran Church and School, Anytown, USA is prayerfully in the process of seeking whom the Lord has chosen to be its next senior pastor. As the call committee has completed a self-study of the congregation, developed a profile of the next senior pastor, received nominations from the congregation and worked with the [_____] District to compile candidates, your name has arisen as one whom the Lord has led us to contact.

Sample Lutheran – Anytown is a loving congregation with more than 60 years of church, school, and preschool history serving our community. We have a strong legacy of local and global mission outreach, along with a warm, welcoming congregation that enjoys a vibrant traditional and contemporary worship life. We view our preschool and K-8 school as a primary mission focus, and praise God for the many families who have joined the congregation through our school. We seek a senior pastor who will lead us in the joy and challenge of effectively accomplishing our mission—connecting people to Jesus in our community, region, and world.

We hope you will participate with us in the call process. Although you may not feel open to a change at this moment and may be perfectly content in your current place of ministry, that makes you exactly the kind of person we are seeking. For more information about us, we invite you to review the enclosed materials as well as view our website at (website address).

We look forward to your reply as together we seek the Lord's will. You can respond to me via email at the address below, or send a written response to the church address to the attention of Chairperson – call committee.

In Christ,

(Name)
Chairperson, Senior Pastor Call Committee
Email:
Mobile:

Appendix K

Email With information Packet for Interviews

[Date]
Dear Rev. [Name],

Thank you for your affirmative response to our request to engage with us in our senior pastor call process. We appreciate your prayerful consideration and seeking the Lord's will with us—we are excited to see what His leading will be as we go forward!

Enclosed with this letter is an information packet that includes a Congregational and Senior Pastor Profile, an in-depth self-study we completed as part of this call process. This study includes rich information on our ministry context, our congregation, and the needed attributes and characteristics we have identified for our next senior pastor.

In addition, we've provided staff position descriptions, an overview of our lay leadership boards, senior pastor position description, some highlights of this year's ministry plan, an information packet about our school, and some web links for you to explore more about Anytown and surrounding cities.

We will soon be contacting you to schedule an interview. Our goal is to conduct these interviews via video. More information to come.

We are looking forward to speaking with you as we follow the call process to the conclusion God has already chosen for us! We pray continued blessing to you and your family as you serve our Lord and His Kingdom.

In Christ,

[Name]
Chairperson, Senior Pastor Call Committee
Email:
Mobile:

Appendix L
Evaluating the Candidates

Identify the Key Traits:

The search committee should work through and identify a few items under each of the major areas listed below. This grid should reflect the description created for the position. Rate each of the items on the basis of the material that you have read in each candidate's file.

Score each item 1-5 1 being low – 5 being high	Name	Name	Name	Name
Desired Attributes				
Major Ministry Function Skills				
Education Requirement				
Preferred Experience				
Other Significant Information				
Quality of references				
Wild Card – Gut Feeling (1-10 points)				
Total				

Collaborate using your individual observations to complete the form below.

On the basis of reading the candidate's file materials and the attributes outlined in the position description, identify those individuals that

- Must be considered for future interviews
- Perhaps should be considered for future interviews
- Should not be considered for future interviews

This worksheet should be filled out as you work through the materials on each candidate and either turned in to the committee chair or taken to the meeting when the narrowing decision will be made.

Candidate's Name	Must Be Considered	Perhaps Should Be Considered	Should Not Be Considered
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			

Remember To:

5. Communicate openly and regularly with others within the congregation and district;
6. Pray unceasingly for all who are involved and impacted by your actions; and
7. Remain vigilant not only for the congregation's interests but also for those of the Pastor that you aspire to add to the congregation's staff.

Appendix M
Pre-Call Interviews

The following is based on information provided by the Council of Presidents.

Pre-call interviews, visits, and post-call visitations are not prohibited by the Holy Scriptures or the Lutheran Confessions. In fact, we highly recommended that these elements are part of your candidate evaluation process. Each congregation has the right to determine procedures for reviewing candidates; however, the congregation needs to function in such a way that the dignity and divine nature of the call is maintained. And it is important that the process remain the same for all candidates.

Remember: **the congregation is not simply "hiring an employee" but is seeking the full measure of the Holy Spirit's guidance and insight in discerning the person to fill the office of Holy Ministry.**

Most congregations today are finding it helpful to conduct pre-call interviews and visits to assist the pastor and congregation in learning more about one another. These interviews and visits enable the candidate and congregation to share a sense of their vision of ministry with each other and provide "first impressions" which may prove helpful in considering and deliberating about a potential call.

Note that the pre-call interview or visit should never be the only impression of value—it is important that congregations consider all the information and credentials provided on candidates.

Also note that not every LCMS pastor will consent to a pre-call interview. **This should not disqualify the candidate from consideration.**

Benefits and Potential Risks

The decision to call a pastor is among the most important that a congregation ever makes. While pre-call interviews are neither commanded nor forbidden by Holy Scripture or the Lutheran Confessions, it is recommended that you make these interviews part of your call process. It is important to exercise care and understand potential risks.

Pre-call interviews are valuable ways to become more familiar with the candidate's theology, interests, experience, skills, and leadership style so that the congregation can equip itself to make an informed decision at its call meeting. Telephone, video, and face-to-face interviews provide both the pastor and congregation insight into each other, and the potential fit between them.

Pre-call interviews can involve risks of which you should be aware. Answers during interviews may give a misleading picture—the pastor and the congregation may not present themselves as they really are. It is imperative that interviews be based on honest, open, and frank conversation, which is honoring to the Holy Spirit and each party involved as together they seek His will.

Personal interviews may also place undue emphasis on the outward aspects of the call (e.g. appearance of the sanctuary, the condition of the parsonage, the neighborhood, the community, the people, etc.) rather than on the challenges and opportunities for mission and ministry. Furthermore, in-person interviews entail costs for lodging, meals, events, etc.

Considering the risks as noted above, pre-call interviews are important and recommended steps in the journey towards calling a pastor as the Holy Spirit leads.

Guidelines

Following are some general guidelines regarding pre-call interviews. If you have questions about these guidelines, do not hesitate to contact your circuit visitor, regional vice president, or district president.

1. A pre-call interview should not be conducted until after the congregation has completed a careful and thorough self-study. The congregation needs to have a clear understanding of its mission and ministry and its current situation. Congregations should wait to decide on whether

or not to conduct pre-call interviews until after they have received their call list, reviewed the information provided by the district president, and conducted an evaluation to determine who are the top candidates they would like to interview.

2. Pre-call interviews should only be conducted with those individuals who are named on the call list provided by the district president. Also, at this point in the call process it is important that you do not add any last-minute candidates without the review and support of the district president.
3. Congregations choosing to conduct pre-call interviews must be careful to maintain the dignity and divine nature of the call. When calling a pastor, congregations are ***not*** hiring an employee, but asking God to send them a pastor. The entire call process should be surrounded with fervent prayer.
4. The actual interviewing will normally be done by members of the call committee. (The call committee and the interview committee may be the same group of individuals or two different groups of individuals or a sub-committee of the call committee as the congregation directs or as the call committee structures itself for its work. Throughout this document, it is understood that references to 'the committee' speak of the group—whatever its title—that undertakes the interviewing task.)
    1. If the congregation's constitution does not provide for a call committee, an enabling resolution should be adopted by the voters' assembly establishing both the make-up and the duties of the call committee.
    2. The candidates for interview will be taken from the call list as prepared by the district president.
    3. Congregations should work closely with the circuit visitor, regional vice president, district president or his representative in conducting pre-call interviews, including requesting assistance in developing questions, determining the best process, and inviting them to participate in the actual interviews.
5. After contacting your top candidates to inquire of their willingness and ability to engage in the call process, it is recommended that interviews with willing candidates occur in two phases:
    1. Initial interviews – 60–90 minute interviews using video (Zoom, Go-to-Meeting, Google Meet, etc.) to determine the list of candidates you would like to bring to your campus for onsite visits.
    2. Onsite visits – Face-to-face meetings with the candidate and his wife over a weekend or 1.5-2.5 days during the week with staff, school faculty, meet-and-greet/Q&A with the congregation, attending worship, touring the campus and community, fellowship, etc. Make sure to be flexible and attend to the comfort of the candidate and his wife.
6. See below for a sample interview format. The Interview Committee will be careful to conduct each candidate interview in the same way. Questions should be formulated based on the results of your self-study. For example, challenges and opportunities that you uncovered in your self-study should lead you to create questions that ask the candidate how he would address similar situations. The Committee should limit the number of questions addressed to the candidates, with the same questions asked of each of the candidates. The congregation can be given the opportunity to submit questions or subjects to the call committee to be touched upon in the interviews. "Trick" questions have no place in these interviews.
7. Ensure your interview questions can be covered adequately in the allotted time for the interview. As you formulate questions, evaluate them in three ways:
    1. What does it have to do with the position?

2. Why do we need to know?
3. Would we be willing to answer the same question about ourselves?

8. Avoid "yes/no" or other short answer questions. Examples of good questions that focus on behavior include:
    1. Tell us about a time when...
    2. What do you want us to know about...
    3. Give us an example of...
    4. You say. . . about yourself. How has this been demonstrated?
    5. Describe an experience where...
9. In conducting the interview, focus on how the pastor functions rather than on the ideas and concepts he expresses. Remember that the manner in which a person has handled a situation in the past may well indicate how he might act in the future given the same or similar circumstances. Note especially expressions of energy, conviction, enthusiasm, respect for acceptable differences, and the way personal faith is shared. Listen carefully in order to ascertain how the pastor draws naturally, winsomely, and confidently on the resources of his education, experience, and faith.
10. A written summary of each interview should be made and distributed to each member of the call committee. It is from these summaries that a report can be made to the congregation, and a candidate or candidates can be recommended. As the Holy Spirit leads, there may be only one candidate whom the committee feels should be recommended, or more than one. A slate of three candidates from which the congregation makes their choice is a good target. Your congregation's constitution may provide guidelines. See below for a sample report to the congregation.
11. As a matter of courtesy, the call committee should communicate with each candidate who has been interviewed, expressing appreciation for his participation.
12. Remember that the committee does not act on its own behalf, but as the representative and servant of the entire congregation. Its agenda should be what's best for the congregation and not some private or individual agenda. At the same time, the committee is chartered to do this work on behalf of the congregation, and so should go about this important business diligently, thoroughly, and confidently, seeking the Holy Spirit's leading and using the gifts God has provided each member to arrive at a God-pleasing recommendation.

Sample Interview Format 1

Some areas of concern and typical questions relating to them may be of benefit to you as you structure your interview process. The following statements or questions are meant to serve as thought starters in developing your interview format. Your statements or questions, of course, should be based on your own congregational situation and on the information about the candidates being interviewed.

CHRISTIAN WORSHIP AND PREACHING

When a change in pastors takes place, changes are also likely to occur in the congregation's worship practice. The principal concern in the interview is for the committee to determine the candidate's attitudes and convictions about worship, preaching, and liturgy.

Preaching, teaching, and leading worship are important aspects of the pastor's work. However, there is often a variety of attitudes concerning what constitutes a "good" sermon, a "good" Bible class, and "good" worship. Therefore, some issues to discuss in this area might be:

1. Describe how you make decisions about worship.
2. Describe how you have introduced changes in the worship practice of your present congregation.
3. Describe your convictions about the importance of the liturgy and the Sacrament of the Altar and how you carry out these convictions.
4. Describe how you go about preparing your sermons.
5. Describe your satisfactions and disappointments in designing and delivering speeches.
6. In preparing sermons, describe what use you make of the Bible, the church year, the Scripture lessons, personal experiences (your own or others), current events, contemporary issues in culture and society.
7. What is the average length of your sermons?
8. Describe how important you consider preaching to be in the church's life.
9. Describe how you use guest preachers.

You should remember that the style and schedule of worship in the candidate's present congregation is not necessarily what he prefers or would choose or would try to duplicate in another situation.

CHRISTIAN GROWTH

Your objective in this area is to discover what might happen if this candidate and your congregation undertake a spiritual journey together. You will be concerned here about the candidate's spiritual/devotional life and the spiritual life, growth, and health of your congregation.

In discussing Christian education, your committee will be interested in some of the following elements in the candidate's responses: his level of creative energy, the range of resources he has used, his familiarity with various educational materials and curricula, his views on the training and involvement of lay people in multiple roles, and his level of direct personal involvement and competence in education.

Your committee will want to discuss all levels of congregational education as it now exists and as you hope it will develop, including Bible classes, Sunday School, Confirmation instruction, youth programs, and topics for auxiliary organizations. Questions may include:

1. Describe how you and your present congregation have grown in spiritual life, separately and together.
2. Describe how you view Christian education and its role in the congregation's life.
3. Describe some of the resources you use to enhance the congregation's spiritual life.
4. Describe what you expect adults and children to learn and retain through the congregational education program.
5. Describe some of your favorite tools and resources for Bible study, Sunday school, and catechism.
6. Describe what curriculum material you use and why.
7. Describe how you recruit, train, assist, support, and supervise a teaching staff.

8. Describe how you involve parents in the Christian education of children.
9. Describe how you teach people to pray.
10. Describe your experience with various traditions of spiritual life, for example, retreats, prayer disciplines, private confession, observance of church festivals, etc.
11. Describe what resources refresh you personally.

PASTORAL CARE

Parishioners always look to the pastor for pastoral care, but especially in times of personal crisis or transition—birth, death, marriage, divorce, vocational stress or change, or physical or mental illness. They want to know and be convinced that their pastor cares about them, that he will be available in time of need, and that he will apply the resources of the Gospel to their condition. Parishioners are also interested in knowing how the pastor deals with problem situations. It is appropriate to visit the candidate about his response to specific situations. For example:

1. Describe what kinds of pastoral care and counseling congregational members can expect from you.
2. Describe how you visit your parishioners (hospital calls, nursing homes, homebound, other).
3. Describe how you prepare a couple for marriage (pre-marital counseling).
4. Describe how you address the issue of couples living together outside of marriage.
5. Describe how you address LGTBQ realities in the church, school, or community.
6. Describe how you handle unwed pregnancies.
7. Describe how you work with:
    1. Troubled teenagers.
    2. Persons involved in the abuse of alcohol or drugs.
    3. Patient and family members in a terminal illness situation.
8. Describe how you minister to those afflicted with bereavement.
9. Describe what you do about nonmembers that come to you for pastoral care or counseling.
10. Describe how you deal with your limitations in counseling.
11. Describe how you provide for pastoral care when you are not there (e.g., on your day off or during vacation).

PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

As the "overseer" of the congregation, a pastor faces a wide range of administrative responsibilities. In covering this area during an interview, you will want to keep your congregational situation in mind and concentrate on it rather than on the candidate's present situation.

During this part of the interview, your committee may wish to ask the candidate:

1. Describe how you relate to the staff, boards, committees, and other leadership groups in the congregation. How do you maintain a balance of power among the various groups of the congregation?
2. Describe how you handle conflict in the congregation. Talk about a relationship you salvaged after a conflict or falling out with the person.

3. Describe how you deal with staff changes.
4. Describe how you intentionally identify, equip, and launch leaders.
5. Describe how you recruit and train volunteers.
6. Describe familiarity with different church governance systems (i.e., church council, policy-based governance) and any preference.
7. Describe how the agenda is prepared for Council/Board of Directors and Voters' meetings.

Indications regarding the candidate's administrative skills can also emerge in the way he handles the correspondence and arrangements for the interview.

LUTHERAN SCHOOLS

When a school or preschool is part of your mission and ministry, it is important to gauge the candidate's philosophy towards and experience with this important part of your congregation. Your Board of Education or whoever is responsible for its operation will undoubtedly have a list of questions or concerns related to the school.

An appropriate approach here might be to ask the candidate:

1. Articulate your church and school growth philosophy and how you have implemented that philosophy.
2. What steps do you take to help students, parents, and staff feel secure, trusting, and open with you?
3. Describe the pastor-school administrator relationship you have attained and describe how it affects the church and school climate.
4. To what extent are you the initiator in developing relationships? Tell me about a relationship you built.
5. How do you help others develop positive relationships?

PERSONAL QUESTIONS

Many personal questions are illegal to ask during pre-employment discussions. In addition, you need to be guided by the principle: "Don't ask a question that you would not answer for yourself." You should not raise questions about the candidate's marital history, sexuality, personal financial matters, or alcoholism or mental illness history. If such matters are of concern to your committee, a means of dealing with them should be worked out before the interview with input from the district president and circuit visitor.

At the same time, a pastor is, to some degree, a public person, so your congregation will naturally have some interest in the candidate as a person.

An appropriate approach here might be to ask:

1. Describe your goals for your personal development.
2. Describe how you schedule and use your time off.
3. Tell us what books you are reading.
4. Describe what you do for fun.
5. Describe your likes and dislikes about how your life and ministry have gone thus far.
6. Describe your appearance and dress while in the office, attending meetings, or making calls.

CONCLUSION

Finally, your committee may find it helpful to conclude each interview by asking the candidate one final question—Is there anything we should know about you that we didn't ask?

EVALUATION

Although each interview will be personal and unique, it is hoped that there will be enough uniformity of process and content so that conclusions about each candidate interviewed can be arrived at and compared with fairness and accuracy. One recommended way to conduct a fair and thorough evaluation is for the call committee to agree upon a ranking system for the candidate's response to each question, 1 to 5, with 1 being a poor response to 5 being an outstanding response. This can serve as a good starting point for discussion, along with each committee member's notes on reactions.

Sample Interview Format 2 – Phone Interview

Before the Day of the First Phone Call

1. Discuss and select the 10–15 questions to be used in the phone interviews.
2. Be sure to arrange for a comfortable, private room with a speakerphone and voice recorder.
3. Identify who is to serve as call host and ask the selected questions (preferably, this person will ask the questions of all candidates interviewed).
4. Review the interview process.
5. Make sure everyone has the interview grid and is clear about the questions to be asked.
6. Meet for prayer 15 minutes before the scheduled start of the interview(s).

During the Phone Call

7. When a candidate answers the phone, verify that it is still okay to proceed with the interview.
8. Ask for permission to record the conversation to share with committee members unable to be present and for future reference by the committee.
9. Indicate to the interviewee how many questions there will be and the allotted time.
10. Introduce (name, position in congregation) those involved in the interview.
11. Begin with an introductory question (i.e., what would you like to tell us about yourself?).
12. Move through the selected questions, allowing adequate time for the candidate to respond.
13. Committee members may ask clarifying questions at any time.
14. When finished asking the selected questions, thank the candidate for sharing responses with the committee.
15. Ask if the candidate has a question for the committee or any additional thoughts and comments.
16. Share the anticipated time frame of the search process and indicate that the candidate will be kept informed of the progress.
17. Close the interview with a brief prayer (one option is to ask the candidate to do so).

Following the Phone Call

18. Share initial reactions to the interview (see Phone Debriefing Worksheet).

19. Agree to make any needed refinements in the interview process.
20. Prepare for the next call if another is happening that night.
21. When interview(s) conclude, turn the interview grid worksheet in to the Chair until the next meeting.

Sample Candidate Summary Report For Congregation

(Provide information to the congregation that illustrates how the pastors you interviewed possess the gifts and attributes described in your pastoral profile. Include a photo of the pastor or the pastor and his family if available.)

Rev. John Smith

Age: 39
Current Congregation: First Lutheran Church and School, Anytown, CA; 700+ worshippers each Sunday

Role: Senior pastor since 2014. Pastor Smith has served churches in Big City, Florida, and Suburb, AZ, starting new church campuses in Florida and metro Big City.

Education: Concordia Irvine, Concordia Seminary St. Louis

Family: Mary [Jones] Smith (married 2003), three children, ages 8-12

Mission-minded Visionary Leader – Pastor Smith was invited to engage with a local faith coalition when he arrived in Anytown. The coalition creates an all-faith group focused on nurturing a sense of community and collaboration to build partnerships with neighborhoods, businesses, schools, non-profits, city leaders, and the faith community. Under Pastor Smith's leadership, they established a ministry to feed the homeless and provide a mobile shower service. He has found great joy in the congregation, catching and repeating the vision to reach the community. Pastor Smith takes his family on mission trips to instill a sense of service and excitement for extending the Kingdom.

Inspiring and Relevant Preacher – Pastor Smith is a high energy, relevant preacher that believes a healthy congregation is exemplified by exciting worship, a desire for fellowship outside of worship, and a willingness to take risks for the sake of the Gospel. He has extensive experience using a high level of technology in worship.

Strong Leader and Administrator – Pastor Smith bases his ministry with transparency anchored in relationships as the foundation. He takes a proactive approach to problem-solving with personal reconciliation as the basis for resolving conflict. He believes that the mission (sharing the fullness of life in Jesus) is more important than any one individual. First Lutheran centers its message in Worship, School Ministries, and Life Groups. He oversees a full- and part-time church and school staff of 83 people.

Church/School Bridge Builder – First Lutheran School is the church's primary mission field. Mary Smith started the Children's Ministry as a bridge between the church and school, and the team organizes nine family events throughout the year. The school has grown to 360+ preschool through 8th-grade students with two classrooms per grade. Pastor Smith is present in the school daily and believes that 80 church and school staff are one team. All of Pastor Smith's pastoral experience has been at churches with schools.

Early to Mid-Career Standout – Pastor Smith was ordained in 2006 and has been a church planter, associate pastor, and senior pastor, with a wide range of experience in different settings. He endeavors to learn from multiple mentors throughout the LCMS and faith community and leverage God's gifts within the church.

Relational, Approachable Spiritual Leader – Pastor Smith is outgoing, engaging, and exhibits high energy. He is an encourager and eager to come alongside people to discover their gifts and find the joy of a full life in Christ, extending the love of Jesus through whatever means necessary.

Rev. Ned Jones

Age: 50
Current Congregation: Faith Lutheran Church and School, Anytown, TX; 500+ worshippers each Sunday
Role: Senior pastor since 2013.
Education: Concordia-Irvine, MPCP/Concordia Seminary St. Louis
Family: Jenny [Brown] Jones (married 1995), five children ages 19-25

Mission-minded Visionary Leader – Pastor Jones believes in humbly creating a place of love and safety in Jesus for sinners so that as many of the lost are reached as possible. Faith is a large established church (founded in 1874) that went through a significant rejuvenation under his leadership as he led them to a new vision for future ministry. Pastor Jones believes that the vision must be proclaimed often and demonstrated consistently. Pastor Jones believes that the most significant open door to bringing people to faith is loving our neighbors.

Inspiring and Relevant Preacher – Pastor Jones loves preaching and takes the attitude that we are all sinners under the cross, pointing each other to Jesus through the word and sacraments. His sermons provide relevant learning coupled with a strong call to action.

Strong Leader and Administrator – Pastor Jones provided skilled, effective leadership to his current congregation in the transition from long-time strong leadership to his own. He is not afraid to lead and challenge the congregation through growth and sacrifice for the sake of reaching the lost. He leads 20+ church and 40+ school staff.

Church/School Bridge Builder – Pastor Jones closely partners with the preschool through 8th-grade school faculty and staff. Over 725 students are served at the school, with each grade supporting 2-3 classes. Pastor Jones has only served congregations with a strong school ministry and firmly believes that the church and school must join in close partnership as one mission for the benefit of the families. He also serves on the Board of Directors of a mission to Kenya based at his congregation.

Early to Mid-Career Standout – Pastor Jones provides strong leadership in preaching, vision casting, and strategic ministry development in moving the congregation towards the vision and mission God has determined for them. He believes in engaging the unchurched through love and care ministries that affect life change and lead others to become disciples of Christ.

Relational, Approachable Spiritual Leader – Pastor Jones is personable and warm, with a gift of "speaking the truth in love" and motivating people to grow and mature in Christ. He also has a humble vulnerability that enables him to share his struggles and joys in ways that build unity and trust.

Appendix N
On-Site Visits

The following resources are provided to assist with the on-site visits of potential candidates.

On-Site Interview Questions

Once again, the call committee identifies the questions you would like to ask during the onsite interview (questions from the phone interview may be re-asked). List them below for use during the actual interviews. Score each candidate's response.

Score each item 1-5 1 = weak – 5 = strong	**Name**	**Name**	**Name**	**Name**	**Name**
Question # 1					
Question # 2					
Question # 3					
Question # 4					
Question # 5					
Question # 6					
Question # 7					
Other Interactions					
Other Observations					
Wild Card – Gut Feeling (1-10 points)					
Total					

Debriefing the On-site Visit

The call committee can discuss the following questions as they debrief the on-site visit:

Regarding the Candidate On-site Interviews

1. The lasting impression of the candidate.
2. Any surprises? Either good or bad?
3. Any new strengths that the candidate could bring to the position?
4. How did you rank this candidate?

Regarding the Process used by the Search Committee

1. What went well?
2. What should we do differently next time?
3. Did the interview seem to have a “good flow” to it?
4. Did the questions surface all the information we needed?
5. Was the search committee interview too long? Too short?
6. How did our schedule work out? Everyone got to spend sufficient time with the candidate?
7. Did everyone understand their role in the process?
8. Is there anything that would disqualify any candidate from being considered?
9. When will the search committee gather to decide which candidates will be recommended to the congregation?

Appendix O
Prayerfully Evaluating Candidates

One of the critical tasks that the call committee is charged with is prayerfully evaluating candidates. It is helpful to have a commonly understood and employed process across your call committee so that you can have consistent discussion and points of comparison. Creating and agreeing on a process and tools will enable the call committee to more easily reach consensus on the candidates to 1) ask to engage in the call process with you, 2) conduct phone or video interviews with, 3) invite to your campus for visits and in-person meetings and interviews, and 4) put forward as the recommended candidate(s) for the congregational vote. Following are some best practices when evaluating candidates.

Prayer is critical

From the first moment your call process starts, you and your call committee, along with your congregation, should be in earnest, consistent prayer, asking for the Holy Spirit's leading. Prayer is the first step at each stage of evaluating candidates, whether during individual study time or when the committee meets as a group. Continually bring forward to your congregation requests for prayer as you progress through the different evaluation stages.

Individual and Group Evaluation

Candidate evaluation includes each call committee member taking the time individually to pray, study information provided, and document impressions. Then, each member is prepared and able to speak to their findings when the call committee discusses candidates as a group. The combination of individual and group evaluation provides a practical and comprehensive perspective.

First Round: PIF/SET Evaluation

The first round of evaluations is based on the Personal Information Forms (PIFs) and the Self-Evaluation Tool (SETs) on pastors as provided by the District on the call list. The goal after reviewing this information is to agree on several candidates that seem to meet your profile criteria and that you want to contact about engaging with you in the call process.

Evaluation Criteria/System

Before beginning evaluation, discuss a system with the call committee that each committee member will use to study the PIF/SET information. For example, you may want to use a 1-5 rating scale for quality or thoroughness of responses in the SETs. One would indicate a very weak response, and a five would show an incisive, informative, and thorough response. Based on their applicability to your pastoral profile, there may be specific questions in the SET that you choose to use the rating system.

Another rating system would be an A-B-C model. Based on all the PIF and SET information provided, an A rating would indicate a candidate that meets or virtually meets all of your pastoral profile criteria and that you want to contact. B ratings would be for candidates meeting most requirements with a few areas of concern. Still, you'd like to get to learn more, and a C rating would indicate candidates who don't meet most of the criteria and for which there are several areas of concern and whom you would not contact.

Whatever system you agree upon, your ratings will help guide you to candidates the call committee feels should be contacted about engaging in your call process.

Second Round: Phone/Video Interviews

The second round of evaluations comes from phone or video interviews with the candidates who indicated they would engage in your call process. These interviews should be 60–90 minutes in length and conducted using the same method with all candidates. Before conducting interviews,

your call committee should develop and agree upon a set of questions to ask the candidate related to your pastoral profile, your mission and ministry, and your context. It's a good practice to assign different call committee members specific questions and then allow for follow-up questions from any call committee member.

Allow time after each interview for the call committee to discuss their impressions. Assign a notetaker to ensure your discussion is captured. These notes will be helpful as you complete interviews and discuss the candidates with whom you would like to move forward.

Once all of your phone/video interviews are complete, the call committee will need to discuss and decide which candidates and wives you would like to bring to your campus for visits. The number of candidates to bring onsite is up to you, but more than three is expensive and difficult to manage. You also may only have one candidate you feel is strong enough to meet face-to-face.

Ensure the candidates you select to visit are a strong fit for your pastoral profile. Provide information to the congregation on the candidates who will be visiting that aligns with the pastoral profile (see Appendix I for sample information.)

Third Round: On-site Visits

The third round of evaluations comes from your face-to-face experience with candidates during their visits. In addition to time spent in further interviews with your call committee, these visits should include time with church and school staff and leadership, meet-and-greets, community tours, and with the congregation during worship and in a Q&A forum. See Appendix Q for a sample agenda for on-site visits.

Once visits are complete, the call committee should meet soon after and decide which candidates to recommend to the congregation to vote upon for issuing a call. This may be one or two candidates. More than two is not recommended as it would likely be challenging to reach a clear majority vote.

Ask for assistance

If you have questions or would like guidance or input during the evaluation process, do not hesitate to contact your district facilitator, circuit visitor, regional vice president, or district president.

Appendix P
Call Documents

The call committee should be acquainted with the Call Documents and be prepared to complete the documents and have them signed on the occasion of the call meeting or immediately on the following day. It is recommended that they be scanned, emailed to the pastor-elect, and mailed to begin deliberating immediately.

The documents should be sent by registered mail with a copy sent to the district president. Accompanying materials may include:

- The latest annual report
- Recent newsletters and bulletins
- Pictures of the church property
- Information about the community and area, as well as real estate information
- A copy of the congregation's Constitution and Bylaws
- Current Budget and Financial Reports
- Pertinent documentation from any self-study conducted by the congregation
- A demographic study of community, i.e., MIssionInSite report from CEF
- A letter of explanation & encouragement from the congregational president

  NOTE: Always send copies of pertinent communications to the district president and circuit visitor. Of course, be sure to retain a copy of all communications and relevant materials for the congregation's files.

  Obtaining Call Documents

  The Call Document can be obtained online at the Holybytes website: https://www.holybytes.com/cop/cornerstone/ You will need a username and password to access the Call Document for Ordained Ministers; acquire this by contacting:

  Laurie Brown
  Executive Assistant to the President
  734.665.3791 ext. 233 or laurie.brown@michigandistrict.org

  Please read through the "Instructions for Call Document" for complete step-by-step instructions on how to complete the form. A completed Call Document will consist of the following parts:

  1. Diploma of Vocation (must be printed on parchment paper)
  2. Supplement to the diploma (4 pages)
  3. Church information section (5 pages)

Appendix Q
Checklist

The following is provided as a checklist for documents that could be included when the official Call is mailed to the candidate chosen by the congregation:

- ☐ Cover letter summarizing packet contents and indicating name, phone number, mailing address, and email address of congregational contact person (see worksheet: Sample Cover Letter)
- ☐ Call papers accurately and wholly prepared with appropriate signatures
- ☐ Current congregation Constitution/Bylaws
- ☐ Current congregational vision, mission, values, and goals
- ☐ Current congregational budget
- ☐ Existing congregation structure and ministry flow chart
- ☐ Current congregation personnel handbook
- ☐ Sunday bulletins for the past three weeks
- ☐ Congregation newsletters for the past three months
- ☐ Any special mailings from the past three months
- ☐ Recent congregational picture directory
- ☐ The Mission and Ministry Inventory
- ☐ The Vacancy Transition Report presented by the Congregation Ministry Facilitator
- ☐ Materials about the congregation's ministries
- ☐ Brochures and bulletins of most recent Christmas and Easter services and special musical presentations
- ☐ Promotional materials, etc. of the congregation (audio, video, or print)
- ☐ Appropriate community information obtained from the Chamber of Commerce

Within two days of the congregation meeting extending the Call, expedite via overnight mail completed documents to Pastor-elect and other pertinent information.

Appendix R

Tools to Prepare for the Call Meeting

1. Guiding questions:

The call committee must be well-prepared for the congregational meeting that will seek to extend a call. As a result, as the committee decides the candidates to be brought to the congregation for consideration, it needs to sort through critical questions. They include:

- How will the committee chair explain to the members how the committee came to its recommendations?
- How will the committee chair explain why a particular person is not on the list of recommended candidates?
- Who will contact the candidates to inform them
    - of the date and time of the congregation meeting and
    - will they be contacted following the congregation meeting to inform them of the congregation's decision?

Knowing the congregation and those likely to attend, the committee may wish to discuss other issues and questions that it believes will arise during the meeting.

2. Ten commandments to consider for the call meeting.

When presenting the slate of candidates to the congregation during a voters meeting, the committee chair should …

Ask for God's guidance before and after the presentation of the slate of candidates. Further …

1. Thou shalt thoroughly explain the search process to the congregation.
2. Thou shalt ensure that all information in the biographical paragraphs is true and accurate to the best of your ability.
3. Thou shalt provide all relevant information about each candidate in a winsome manner.
4. Thou shalt be fair during the presentation of all names and biographical sketches.
    a. Thou shalt have similar biographical paragraphs, pictures, or clip art for each candidate.
    b. Thou shalt list names of candidates in alphabetical order.

5. Thou shalt not allow committee or congregational members to “stump,” “politic,” “manipulate,” or label a particular candidate on the list.

6. Thou shalt provide ample time for questions, comments, and prayer.

7. Thou shalt be totally honest and open regarding questions from congregation members about each of the candidates.

8. Once all questions have been asked, thou shalt present to the congregation a series of recommendations that convey the thinking of the call committee.

9. Once the congregation has selected a candidate, thou shalt give a unanimous vote to the selected candidate.

10. Following the call meeting, thou shalt collect and destroy all biographical information for confidentiality and privacy of all concerned.

Appendix S

Pastor-Elect Site Visit

If the Pastor-elect chooses to visit with the congregation, this visit must be well organized and receptive to the needs and interests of the Pastor-elect and his family. Hopefully, the following checklist will aid the call committee as they develop the schedule and cover the many details of such a visit.

- ☐ Confirm a mutually agreeable time for an on-site visit.
- ☐ Arrange air and ground transportation, as needed.
- ☐ Arrange housing—offering the option to stay with members or in a hotel.
- ☐ Schedule time with a realtor, if so needed.
- ☐ Arrange for hosts to cover meals and tour the community.
- ☐ Introduce the candidate-elect to the congregation at the end of the services.
- ☐ Provide a greeting time for the congregation following the service.
- ☐ Schedule time to meet with key leaders, ministries, and boards. Be sure to check with Pastor-elect's spouse regarding preferences, offering either meeting with his spouse or providing some other alternatives.
- ☐ Be sensitive to the Pastor-elects' needs … Whom would they like to meet? Would they like some free time to "roam" the community? Give the Pastor-elect the flexibility to revise the agenda.
- ☐ Clarify with the Pastor-elect whether the proposed schedule meets his needs.
- ☐ Provide a voucher and be transparent about which expenses will be paid and reimbursed.
- ☐ Send the proposed schedule to the Pastor-elect at least 3–5 days before arrival with congregational contact information.
- ☐ Ensure there is a positive wrap-up meeting to discuss final questions and concerns.
- ☐ Obtain any additional follow-up items that the Pastor-elect still needs to receive.
- ☐ As feasible, get a sense of when the Pastor-elect hopes to make a final decision.

Appendix T
Sample Call Worship Services

Sample A

Hymn: *O Holy Spirit*, Enter In vs. 1,2,3 (TLH 235, LBW 459, LW 160) Versicles page 41 (TLH), 131 (LBW), 208 (LW)
Message from Pastor _____
Prayer

Silence for Meditation
First Vote
Hymn: *With the Lord Begin Thy Task* vs. 1,2,5 (TLH 540, LBW 444, LW 483)
Hymn: *Come, Oh, Come, thou Quickening Spirit* vs. 1,2,5 (TLH 226, LBW 478, LW 165)
(If any additional count hymns are needed to fill the time, select one from the list on the last page.)

First Reading

"How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ" (Romans 10:14–17).

"Moses spoke to the Lord, saying, 'Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord may not be as sheep that have no shepherd'" (Numbers 27:15–17).

Prayer
Silence
Second Vote
Hymn: *What God Ordains Is Always Good* vs. 1,2,5 (TLH 521, LBW 446, LW 422,) Choir Anthem: *God Be in My Head*

Results of count

Second Reading

"I will gather the remnant of my flock … and I will bring them back to their fold, and … I will set shepherds over them who will care for them, and they shall fear no more" (*Jeremiah 23:3–4).*

When Jesus handed over to Simon Peter the charge of the Christian church, he was careful to use the possessive pronoun "my:" "Simon, son of Jonas, feed my lambs. They are not yours, they are mine, but I wish you to look after them for a little while. Guard them, feed them, guide them, be good to them for my sake. Remember my goodness, watchfulness, considerateness, patience, compassion, readiness to help, swiftness to heal, and gladness to sacrifice. Be the kind of shepherd to my lambs and sheep that I have been to you. Follow me!" – *Charles E. Jefferson, 1912*

Prayer
Silence
Third Vote
Hymn 436 (TLH) *The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want* (TLH 436, LBW 451, LW 416) Hymn: *All Depends on Our Possessing* vs. 1,2,5 (TLH 425, LBW 447, LW 415)

Numbers 27:15–17

Results of count

Third Reading

If the church is called a flock, the minister is the shepherd to seek the lost, to comfort the sick, to tend the flock in exercises of tenderness, consideration, and care. If the church is a household, the minister is the steward faithful and wise, dispensing the provision of the house according to the needs of its members. If the church of God is a city, he is the watchman to wake and warn slumberers of their peril. If it is a garden, he is the gardener to plant and water the soil, cleanse the earth, watch the plant's growth, and bring forth the harvest. If it is a building, he is the master-builder, building the sure foundation with living stones on Christ, creating a spiritual house, a dwelling place of God through the Spirit.

Prayer
Silence
Fourth Vote
Hymn: *Send, O Lord, Thy Holy Spirit* (TLH 491, LW 263)
Hymn: *If Thou But Suffer God to Guide Thee* vs. 1,7 (TLH 518, LBW 453, LW 420) Results of Count

Fourth Reading

There is no dearer treasure, nor any more precious thing on earth or in this life than an honest and faithful pastor or preacher. He does great and mighty works. He seeks to inform and instruct those in his care, comfort and advise those troubled, help maintain peace and settle differences, teach obedience, morals, discipline, and honor. By his work and by his word, the kingdom of God is maintained in the world; so, too, are kept the name and the honor and the glory of God, the true knowledge of God, the good faith and understanding of Christ, the fruits of the suffering, blood and death of Christ, the gifts and works and power of the Holy Spirit, the true and saving use of baptism and the sacrament, and the right and pure doctrine of the gospel.

Prayer
Silence
Fifth Vote
Choir Anthem: *O God, Send Heralds* (LBW 283)
Hymn: *May We Thy Precepts, Lord, Fulfill* (TLH 412, LBW 353,186, LH 389,327) Results of Count

Closing Hymn: *On What has Now been Sown* vs. 1,2 (TLH 46, LBW 261, LW 217)

Extra Hymns: TLH 36,39, 234, 416, 514 LBW 257, 480, 483, 533, 543, 545 LW 166, 392, 426, 443, 444, 460

Hymn listings are suggestions only.

Sample B

Welcome (Congregational President) and Opening Prayer
Song: *Be Thou My Vision*
Scripture Reading: Romans 10:14–17

Prayer

Scripture Reading: Numbers 27:15–17

Call Committee Report – Call Committee Chairperson

Discussion of Voting Procedure – Congregational President or Board Secretary

Song: Holy Spirit, Ever Dwelling (LSB 650)

Voting

Request motion for unanimous vote

Explain Next Steps (Including immediate phone call to pastor elect, a few weeks for him and his family to seek the Holy Spirit's will, etc.)

Closing Prayer

Appendix U

For Pastors: Communicating You Received a Call

What to do When You Receive a Call

Call your current circuit visitor soon after the phone call and tell him that you have received a Call and that the Call Documents are coming. Do not announce to your congregation that you have received a Call without the Call Documents.

Refrain from telling specific individuals in your congregation about your Call before informing the congregation. They all deserve to hear it from you. Announce it on a Sunday at a typically scheduled service. Tell them that you have two Calls from God: one to serve them and one to serve these other people. You will be considering both of them, praying about it, and welcome their advice and prayers. You will decide and announce it in a few weeks, again on a Sunday.

Send a letter of acknowledgment to the calling congregation. Ask for their prayers and advice also. Inform them, too, of the deadline. Copy both district presidents and both circuit visitors. If possible and you are serious about accepting the Call, arrange a visit to the calling congregation. Don't hesitate to arrange for phone calls with the calling congregation.

Announcing Your Decision

If you need more time than anticipated to make a decision, announce that to your current congregation. Do not delay for more than a week, however. When you have decided, send a letter to the calling congregation with your announcement. Copy both district presidents and both circuit counselors. If there will be a long time between receiving the letter from you and your announcement to your current congregation, ensure the calling congregation, circuit visitor, and district president understand that and know to keep your decision confidential until you announce it to your current congregation.

Announce it to your current congregation on a Sunday. Even if you don't usually make announcements at the beginning of the service, make this one at the beginning. Do not keep your congregation in suspense. If you accept the Call, you must make sure there is no chance it could somehow get to a member of your current congregation before your announcement. The community you currently serve gets the priority. You may also call your contact at the calling congregation and allow them to announce it on Sunday morning.

If You Accept the Call

Leaving a congregation is not easy—don't drag out the process. Communicate that, even though it breaks your heart to go, you think this is the right decision, and God wants you there. Express thankfulness for your time with them and that you will keep them in prayer. Plan to leave quickly after you announce that you have accepted the other Call. Your announcement should include the date of your final Sunday. Two or three weeks is ideal. The longer there is any delay, the longer you endure the situation's awkwardness. They also need to get started with the vacancy and look for a new pastor.

If you live in a parsonage, you should meet with whatever governing board you have as soon as possible and negotiate the terms of your leaving. How long can you stay in the parsonage after your final Sunday? You should list things that need repair and attention during the vacancy. Do your successor a favor and be very detailed, including items that were broken or substandard when you got there, right down to saying that the living room needs to be painted in a neutral tone or the refrigerator isn't big enough for a modern family of four.

If You Decline the Call

Express your gratitude to the calling congregation. Thank them for the care and kindness they showed to you (and your wife) during the calling process. Give the calling congregation a reason for declining. Be gracious and straightforward. If there is a problem, such as low salary, substandard housing, or even obvious trouble in the congregation, they need to hear it clearly to assist them in the next round of their calling process. If it is because of your current family situation or needs, there is no problem with telling them that as well. Whatever it is, explain it so they have an opportunity to address it as needed.

Appendix V
Sample Installation/Ordination Services

Sample installation and ordination services are available online at:
https://cph.org/images/topics/pdf/enewsletter/OrdinationService.pdf?hsCtaTracking=1c53aeba-d3bb-4fd1-8164-6bd7f678602d%7C93d9ab8f-c466-42b5-b8d9-520e438cf2f5

[ ] Indicates material parenthetical to the worship planners, to be deleted from the worship folder ( ) Indicates instructions to the congregation, to appear in the worship folder
Acknowledgments
Adapted from Lutheran Service Book, Divine Service, Setting One and Lutheran Service Book Agenda © 2006 Concordia Publishing House.
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Ordination / Installation of a Pastor

[Using Divine Service Setting One from Lutheran Service Book and rites from the LSB Agenda. Options provided for ordination and installation individually or together.]

AS WE GATHER

The Office of the Holy Ministry has been instituted by Christ Himself as a gift to His Church (John 20:19–23; Ephesians 4:11–16). Through the Christian congregation, as the holder of all churchly authority, God calls qualified men to fill this divinely established office. Ordination is the solemn, public confirmation of that call (1 Timothy 4:14–16; Titus 1:5–9; Tractate 70; Apology XIII 11–13). The rites of ordination and installation are distinct. Ordination is the Church's recognition that a man has been rightly called by God through the Church into the Office of the Holy Ministry, whereas Installation marks the beginning of a pastor's work in a particular place.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

HYMN OF INVOCATION "O Holy Spirit, Enter In" [LSB 913; LW 160; TLH 235]
Stand

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Kneel/Stand

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the (+) Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
Pastor: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
People: But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

Pastor: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

People: Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

SERVICE OF THE WORD

ENTRANCE HYMN "Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord" [LSB 497; LW 154; TLH 224]
[The procession into the church is as follows: crucifer, the candidate, assisting ministers, and the presiding minister.]

KYRIE LSB 152
HYMN OF PRAISE Gloria in Excelsis LSB 154

[OR]

This Is the Feast LSB 155

SALUTATION COLLECT OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.
Merciful God, we humbly implore You to cast the bright beams of Your light upon Your Church that we, being instructed by the doctrine of the blessed apostles, may walk in the light of Your truth and finally attain to the light of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

[OR – For Ordination]

Pastor: Let us pray.
O God, You led Your holy apostles to ordain pastors in every place. Grant that Your flock, under the guidance of Your Holy Spirit, may choose suitable men for the ministry of Word and Sacrament and may uphold them in their work for the extension of Your kingdom; through Him who is the chief Shepherd of our souls, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

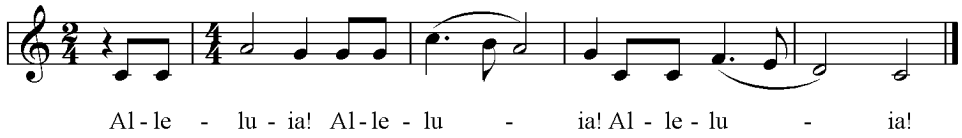
Sit

[Additional options for the readings are in LSB Agenda pages 200–202]

OLD TESTAMENT READING Isaiah 52:7–10 (The feet of him who brings good news)
Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.
PSALM Psalm 40:3–4, 7–11, 16
EPISTLE Romans 10:14–17 (How are they to hear without preaching?)
Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Stand

ALLELUIA and **VERSE**
HOLY GOSPEL John 20:19–23 (As the Father has sent me, I am sending you)
Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the twentieth chapter.
People: Glory to You, O Lord.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.
People: Praise to You, O Christ.

Sit

HYMN OF THE DAY "Preach You the Word" [LSB 586; LW 259]

SERMON

Stand

CREED Nicene Creed

All: I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the lifeΞof the world to come. Amen.

[Note: The rites are available in full in Lutheran Service Book: Agenda. Only portions of the rites from the Agenda that require congregational responses are printed here. For a complete guide for the presiding minister, see Lutheran Service Book: Agenda page 160 for ordination and page 174 for installation.]

RITE OF ORDINATION AND/OR INSTALLATION OF A PASTOR

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Ξ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
People: Amen.

[For Ordination]

Pastor: Beloved in the Lord, [full name of candidate] has been called by the Lord of the Church into the Office of the Holy Ministry of the Word and Sacraments. He has been prepared for this ministry by careful study and prayer. He has been examined and declared ready and prepared to undertake this sacred responsibility, and, by the guidance of God the Holy Spirit, he has in the Church's usual order been called to be pastor of [name and place]. According to apostolic practice, he is now presented to be ordained and consecrated to this office established by God.

[For Installation]

Pastor: Beloved in the Lord, through the Church's usual order, the Reverend [full name] has been called by the Lord of the Church to be pastor of [name of place].

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Pastor: Let us pray.

COLLECT

[For Ordination]

Pastor: O Lord God, heavenly Father, by the blessed light of Your holy Word You have led us to the knowledge of Your Son. We humbly implore You to replenish us with the grace of Your Holy Spirit that we may ever walk in the light of Your truth and, rejoicing with sure confidence in Christ, our Savior, be brought to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
People: Amen.

[For Installation]

Pastor: O almighty God, by Your Son, our Savior, You have always given to Your Church on earth faithful shepherds to guide and feed Your flock. Therefore, we pray, make all pastors diligent to preach Your holy Word and to administer Your means of grace, and grant Your people wisdom to follow in the way that leads to life eternal; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS
CONFESSIONAL SUBSCRIPTION
PROMISES

[For Ordination]

ORDINATION

Pastor: [Jesus said:] "Peace be to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." John 20:21–23 NKJV alt.

[For Installation]

Pastor: Beloved in the Lord, through the Church's usual order, the Reverend [full name] has been called by the Lord of the Church to be pastor of [name of place].

Pastor: [Full name of candidate], I ordain and consecrate you to the Office of the Holy Ministry of the Word and Sacraments in the one, holy, catholic [or Christian], and apostolic Church, in the name of the Father and of the Ξ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: The Lord Jesus pour out on you His Holy Spirit for this office and work that you may faithfully preach the Gospel and administer the Sacraments. Amen.

The assisting pastors each in turn lay both their hands directly on the newly ordained, adding an appropriate blessing or passage from the Word of God.

People: Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Pastor: Beloved in the Lord, Holy Scripture says, "Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you." Will you, the faithful, according to the Church's public confession, and speaking for the whole Church, receive [name] as a servant of Christ and minister of Word and Sacrament? If so, then answer: We will.
People: We will.

The presiding minister prays, ending with:
Pastor: To You, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all glory and honor, both now and forever.
People: Amen.

If the installation is to take place at a later date, the ordination continues with the Prayer of the Church.

[For Installation immediately following Ordination]

INSTALLATION OF THE PASTOR OF A CONGREGATION AT ORDINATION

The presiding minister addresses the congregation:
Pastor: Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, [name] has been called to be (a) pastor of [name of congregation]. I ask you now, in the presence of God: Will you receive him, show him that love, honor, and obedience in the Lord that you owe to the shepherd and teacher placed over you by your Lord Jesus Christ, and will you support him by your gifts and fervent prayer? If so, then answer: We will, with the help of God.
People: We will, with the help of God.
Pastor: Will you honor and uphold your pastor as he serves Christ in all his God-pleasing responsibilities? Will you aid him as he cares for his family? Will you be diligent to "put the best construction on everything," recognizing that "love covers a multitude of sins"? If so, then answer: We will, with the help of God.
People: We will, with the help of God.

Pastor: The almighty and most merciful God strengthen and assist you always.

The presiding minister asks the newly ordained/called:

Pastor: Are you willing and ready to assume this public trust and responsibility?
Candidate: I am.
Pastor: [Full name of newly ordained], I install you as (a) pastor of [name of congregation(s)], in the name of the Father and of theΞSon and of the Holy Spirit.
People: Amen.

Pastor: Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with

everything good that you may do His will, working in you that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Hebrews 13:20–21

People: Amen.

The presiding minister prays one or both of the following.

Pastor: Let us pray.
Merciful God and Father, You have graciously promised that, through the preaching of the crucified Christ, those who believe in Him will be saved. By Your Holy Spirit grant grace to [name], whom You have given to be pastor of [this congregation / these congregations]. Grant him readiness and steadfastness in this ministry, patience, understanding, and great zeal. Support and strengthen him in Your service that by Your Word Your Church may be built and increased; through Your Son, our great High Priest, Jesus Christ, our Lord.
People: Amen.

Pastor: Almighty and most merciful God and Father, through Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, You have established Your Church to be a temple and dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. We give thanks that You continue to provide shepherds to feed and serve Your flock in which the Holy Spirit has made them overseers. We humbly implore You ever to strengthen the labors of Your ministers, that through their ministry of Word and Sacrament Your people may increase in Your knowledge and service and grow up into Him who is the head, even Jesus Christ, to whom, with You and the Holy Spirit, be all glory now and forever.

People: Amen.

Pastor: Go, therefore, and be a shepherd of the Good Shepherd's flock. Preach the Word of God; administer the Holy Sacraments; offer prayer for all the faithful; instruct, watch over, and guide the flock among which the Holy Spirit has placed you. Do it not for earthly gain but with great joy, for you have been called not to lordship but to serve His flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

People: The almighty and most merciful God, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.
Amen.

[For Installation not preceded by Ordination]

INSTALLATION OF THE PASTOR OF A CONGREGATION

Pastor: Beloved in the Lord, Holy Scripture says, "Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you." You have heard the solemn promise of him called to be your pastor. Will you receive him, show him that love, honor, and obedience in the Lord that you owe to the shepherd and teacher placed over you by your Lord Jesus Christ, and will you support him by your gifts and pray for him always that in his labors he may retain a cheerful spirit and that his ministry among you may be abundantly blessed? If so, then answer: We will, with the help of God.

People: We will, with the help of God.
Pastor: Will you honor and uphold your pastor as he serves Christ in all his God-pleasing responsibilities? Will you aid him as he cares for his family? Will you be diligent to "put the best construction on everything," recognizing that "love covers a multitude of sins"? If so, then answer: We will, with the help of God.
People: We will, with the help of God.
Pastor: The almighty and most merciful God strengthen and assist you always. Are you willing and ready to assume this public trust and responsibility?
Candidate: I am.
Pastor: [Full name of pastor-elect], I install you as (a) pastor of [name of congregation(s)], in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
People: Amen.
Pastor: Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do His will, working in you that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever.
People: Amen.

Stand

Pastor: Let us pray.
Merciful God and Father, You have graciously promised that, through the preaching of the crucified Christ, those who believe in Him will be saved. By Your Holy Spirit grant grace to [name], whom You have given to be pastor of [this congregation / these congregations]. Grant him readiness and steadfastness in this ministry, patience, understanding, and great zeal. Support and strengthen him in Your service that by Your Word Your Church may be built and increased; through Your Son, our great High Priest, Jesus Christ, our Lord.
People: Amen.
Pastor: Almighty and most merciful God and Father, through Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, You have established Your Church to be a temple and dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. We give thanks that You continue to provide shepherds to feed and serve Your flock in which the Holy Spirit has made them overseers. We humbly implore You ever to strengthen the labors of Your ministers, that through their ministry of Word and Sacrament Your people may increase in Your knowledge and service and grow up into Him who is the head, even Jesus Christ, to whom, with You and the Holy Spirit, be all glory now and forever.
People: Amen.

HYMN "To God the Holy Spirit Let Us Pray" [LSB 768; LW 155; TLH 231]

The service continues presided over by the newly ordained/installed.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH
A. Minister: Dearly beloved, let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.
Pastor: Almighty and ever-living God, who by Your holy apostle has taught us to

make prayers and supplications, and to give thanks for all men, we humbly implore You most mercifully to hear our prayer which we offer to Your divine majesty. We beseech You to inspire continually Your whole Church with the Spirit of truth, unity, and concord. Grant that all who confess Your holy name may agree in the truth of Your holy Word, and live in unity and godly love. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

A. Minister: Let us pray for our country and for all those whom God has set in authority over us.

Pastor: We beseech You, heavenly Father, to save and defend our country. Grant to the President of the United States, the Governor of our state, the Congress and state legislature, the judges and magistrates, and all others in civil authority, wisdom and strength to know and to do Your will. We implore You also to direct and dispose the hearts of all rulers that they may truly and impartially minister justice to the punishment of wickedness and vice, and to the maintenance of God's true religion and virtue. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

A. Minister: Let us pray for all pastors, and for all those who hear and receive their ministry.

Pastor: Give grace, O heavenly Father, to _____, our synodical president, to _____, our district president, to all pastors and deacons that they may both by their life and doctrine proclaim Your true and lively Word and rightly and duly administer Your holy Sacraments. And to all Your people give Your heavenly grace that with meek heart and due reverence they may hear and receive Your holy Word, truly serving You in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

A. Minister: Let us pray for all those in our parish who are homebound, for those afflicted in any way, [and especially for _____].

Pastor: We most humbly implore You of Your goodness, O Lord, mercifully to consider this congregation which is here assembled in Your name to celebrate the remembrance of the most glorious death of Your Son. And we beseech You to comfort and help all those who in this transitory life are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness or any adversity, especially the homebound in this parish, [as well as _____], and all others who request our prayers [pause for private intentions]. We pray that by Your healing grace You would defend them from every evil to body and soul. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

A. Minister: Let us commend to our Lord all those who have gone before us in the faith.

Pastor: We commend to Your mercy, O Lord, [_____ and] all Your servants who have departed with the sign of faith and now rest in the sleep of peace [pause for private remembrances]. Grant to them, we beseech You, Your mercy and everlasting peace, and that, on the day of the resurrection of all flesh, we and all Your servants of the mystical body of Your Son may be set together on His right hand and hear His most joyful voice saying, "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Sit

OFFERING

Stand

OFFERTORY LSB 159

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

PREFACE LSB 160

PROPER PREFACE

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God; for You have mightily governed and protected Your holy Church, in which the blessed apostles and evangelists proclaimed Your divine and saving Gospel. Therefore with patriarchs and prophets, apostles and evangelists, and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:
Grant this, O Father, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our only Mediator, who lives and reigns with You, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
People: Amen.

SANCTUS LSB 161

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross.
Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
People: Amen.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My (+) body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”
In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My Ξ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

Pastor: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.
People: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.
Pastor: O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

LORD'S PRAYER

People: Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.

PAX DOMINI LSB 163
AGNUS DEI LSB 163

Sit

DISTRIBUTION

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

"God of the Prophets, Bless the Prophets' Sons"	[LSB 682; LW 258; TLH 483]
"O Christ, Who Called the Twelve"	[LSB 856]
"O Lord, We Praise Thee"	[LSB 617; LW 238; TLH 313]
"Lord of Truth, Speak through Your Servant"	[Accompaniment provided separately]

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE Thank the Lord LSB 164
[OR]
Nunc Dimittis LSB 165

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

Pastor: Let us pray.

People: We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Pastor: Amen.

BENEDICTION LSB 166

CLOSING HYMN "Send, O Lord, Your Holy Spirit" [LSB 681; LW 263; TLH 491]

Music Suggestions

Small Choir

"The Joy of the Lord Is Your Strength," Wismar/Bender, M, SAB, Kb, C-I, Cong, 98-3834 "O Lord, I Love the Habitation of Your House," Bender, M, 2pt mix, Or, 98-2859POD/PDF "God Is for Us," Wismar/Gieseke, SAB, Kb, 98-4026

"Not unto Us," Hildebrand, SAB, Or, Vi, opt Cong, 98-4069

Large Choir

"Continue in the Things That You Have Learned," Starke/Bobb, SATB, Pi, opt Fl, Vc, Perc, Cong, 98- 4094

"Thee, Lord, Would I Serve," Franzmann/Bender, M, SATB, Or, 98-3679POD/PDF

"Benediction," Behnke, SATB, opt. HB, opt. Pi, 98-4165

"Benediction," von Kampen, D, SATB, Or, 98-4100

"Lord, Make Me an Instrument of Thy Peace," Graham, SATB, Kb, Ob, 98-3616

"Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart" from The Praetorius Chorale Book, Schalk, SATB, 97-7671

"Comfort, Comfort Ye My People," deSilva, SATB, Kb, opt Insts, 98-4034POD/PDF

"Holy Spirit, the Dove Sent from Heaven," Starke/Hobby, Or, 2Tr, 2Tb, Perc, Cong, 97-7160

Children

"Come, Holy Spirit" from The Concordia Children's Choir Book, Marriott, U or 2pt, Pi, C-I, opt. HB, opt. Cong, 97-7668

"Holy Spirit, Light Divine" from Children Rejoice and Sing, Blersch, 2pt, Pi, C-I, 97-7074

Keyboard (Click each hymn tune name for more suggestions via cph.org.)

WIE SCHÖN LEUCHTET

Introductions, Harmonizations, Accompaniments, Interpretations, Vol. 3, Blersch, Or, 97-7183

Musica Sacra: Easy Hymn Preludes for Organ, Vol. 3, Hildebrand, Or, 97-7052

KOMM, HEILIGER GEIST, HERRE GOTT

Chorale Preludes and Postludes for Manuals, Volume 3, Callahan, Or, 97-6930POD/PDF

Pentecost Suite, Pelz, Or, 2Tr, 2Tb, Ti, 97-6712

O HEILAND, REISS DIE HIMMEL AUF

Musica Sacra: Easy Hymn Preludes for Organ, Vol. 5, Culli, Or, 97-7193 Six Hymn Improvisations, Set 7, Hildebrand, Or, 97-7289

KOMM, GOTT SCHÖPFER

Creative Accompaniments for Hymns, Vol. 1, Behnke, Or, 97-6767 Come, Holy Ghost, Our Souls Inspire, Kosche, Or, 2Tr, 2Tb, 97-6940

VENI CREATOR SPIRITUS
Hymn Preludes for the Pentecost Season, Held, Or, 97-5517 Chorale Preludes of Harald Rohlig, Set 2, Rohlig, Or, 97-7399
NUN BITTEN WIR
Chorale Preludes of Dietrich Buxtehude, Hyslop, ed, Or, 97-7201
Soli Deo Gloria: 8 Hymn Preludes for Organ, Set 1, Weber, Or, 97-7444
WERDE MUNTER
Master Organ Works of Jan Bender, Vol.1, Fienen, ed, Or, 97-7098
Assist Me to Proclaim: Alternate Hymn Settings, Vol. 2, Gerike, Or, 97-7361
Handbell
"Come, Holy Ghost, Our Souls Inspire" from Processionals for the Day of Pentecost, Semmann, HB(4–5), Level II, 97-6525
"Rejoice, O Pilgrim Throng," McChesney, HB(3–5), Level III, 97-6388
"O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright," Moklebust, HB(2–3), opt HC(2–3), opt WC, FC, Level II, 97-7421 "O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright," Moklebust, HB(3–5), opt HC(3–5), opt WC, FC, Level II, 97-7428 "Come, Holy Ghost," Delancy, HB(3,5), HC(3,5), Level II, 97-7416
"To God the Holy Spirit Let Us Pray" from Ten Hymn Accompaniments for Handbells, Set 2, Folkening, HB(3), Level I, 97-6035POD/PDF

Appendix W

Building a Relationship Between a Pastor and Congregation

As the call process unfolds, members experience a growing desire to establish a relationship between the congregation and the new pastor as mutually beneficial and productive as possible. This desire is analogous to that experienced by a bride and groom as they enter their new and unique relationship. Each recognizes and accepts that neither is perfect. There will be differences requiring understanding and adjustment by each. However, their hope is confident that with God's help, they will overcome their differences through love and will work together toward common goals.

To make their hope a reality, the congregation must recognize that the covenant relationship established with their pastor through the call process is in accord with God's plan. He plans that each Christian serve God by serving one another. The servant relationship makes it possible for the congregation and pastor to develop trust and concern. Each desire to hear the other's burdens, do good to one another as God instructs, and witness to their unity through such service in Christ. Working early toward such a relationship means that there will be not only a good honeymoon but a significant marriage between congregation and pastor.

In the Diploma of Vocation and the self-study findings, the congregation identifies its corporate needs, priorities, and expectations. By his acceptance, the pastor vows that with God's help, he will serve the congregation, give it pastoral leadership, and help the congregation achieve its mission and ministry objectives.

From the congregation's viewpoint, its needs, priorities, and expectations are likely to be primary importance. However, by its call, the congregation commits itself with God's help to make every effort to meet the pastor's needs and expectations and to serve him and his family. This commitment by the congregation is of equal importance to the congregation as it is to the pastor. When the congregation fulfills its commitment, it cements a feeling of oneness in Christ which encourages and motivates the congregation and the pastor to strive to give their best. The result is that both the congregation and pastor serve the Lord as He intends.

The attitudes communicated by the congregation and perceived by the pastor and his family can enhance the prospects that the relationship between the congregation and the pastor will be a good one. The following are examples of communicating good attitudes:

- We are happy that God has sent you to us. We desire to serve the Lord with you.
- We feel good about ourselves and are ready to face up to our weaknesses.
- We recognize that we are all imperfect human instruments of God. Pastor, we do not expect you to be excellent in everything either.
- We desire to make the best use of your time and talents, pastor. We, as laity, desire to use our abilities to complement yours to achieve the congregation's mission and ministry objectives.
- We value you and your family and desire to assist all of you to become an integral part of our congregation and community. We will do our best to provide adequate financial support for your work and family's needs.

The Desire to Serve the Lord Together

It is a warm and joyous feeling to be welcome and needed. This is even more so when the message expressed is the feeling that the Lord has sent you. There are many opportunities to clarify the congregation's desire to serve the Lord under the unique pastoral leadership of the pastor being called. The thought here is to express, orally and in writing, your happiness and thanks that God, through His Holy Spirit, has led you to the particular person you are calling.

Expressions of the value you place on him and his family and your desire to serve the Lord with them are especially meaningful.

The first opportunity to communicate your feelings occurs following the congregation's decision reached in the call meeting or call service. Usually, a telephone call is made to the pastor the same day, or the next day, as appropriate. The next opportunity occurs in the letter transmitting the Diploma of Vocation and related Call Documents. Other opportunities arise should the pastor visit the congregation before or after acceptance. Following installation, there is no end to the possibilities for sharing your feelings with the pastor and his family.

Willingness to Deal Honestly with Weakness

The areas in which the congregation needs strengthening are identified in the self-study. Often they are humanly challenging to deal with but can be most productive with God's help. What is required is a willingness to accept their reality and strive to find solutions. Emphasis should be given to what can be done to overcome a weakness rather than to excuse, defend, or blame it. The pastor is encouraged and inspired when the congregation communicates that it feels good about itself, recognizes its opportunities or challenges, its strengths and the talents available, and is anxious to get on with its ministries.

The Pastor is Human, Too

Do not expect the impossible! Avoid making the pastor feel guilty or defensive. The congregation has every right to expect the pastor to administer the Office of the Keys and carry out the pastoral duties enumerated in the Diploma of Vocation. At the same time, the pastor is human and is unlikely to have all the talents to the degree necessary to perform all of his assigned responsibilities equally well. Encourage and allow him to be himself and to call upon the lay and staffing talents available to complement his ministry in those areas in which others may be better qualified. In the most productive relationship, the congregation and pastor recognize and agree upon those talents best provided by the pastor and the laity.

Best Use of the Pastor's Time

Demands on a pastor's time frequently exceed the amount of time available. Needs by individual members for pastoral assistance due to a personal crisis, death of a family member, illness, surgery, accident, etc., often arise unexpectedly. Events such as meetings of the Council, Voters, and Elders often require the pastor's presence. Also, the pastor must have time for planning worship services, sermon preparation, counseling of members, confirmation and new member instruction, weddings, and travel to and from the activities cited.

However, there are other activities and meetings where only his occasional presence is essential. Good stewardship requires determination and agreement as to the best use of the pastor's time and talents. The laity can meet many ministry needs under the pastor's direction. Such complementary ministry strengthens the body of Christ, and, in the process, God is glorified.

Assisting the Pastor and His Family

The Call Documents sent to the pastor typically include materials to help orient him to the congregation and community. Examples are:

- A brief history of the congregation
- A congregational directory and pictorial directory, if available
- A copy of the congregational newsletter or similar periodic communication sent to the

members

- A copy of the Constitution and Bylaws
- A copy of the Governance Policy, if applicable
- A copy of the current budget report comparing budget to actuals
- A description of current congregational objectives, policies, and decisions or plans that the pastor would be expected to support or carry out
- Self-study findings, including LCEF MissionInsite study
- A recent, detailed map of the area the congregation serves to indicate the location of hospitals members generally use; area in which most members reside; and schools most members' children attend
- A brief explanation of the type of community served, types of housing available and current price ranges

  It is also helpful to clarify what expenses the congregation will pay (transportation, lodging, meals, etc.). Will his wife's expenses be included, should the pastor decide to visit before accepting the call or locating housing?

  It may be beneficial if the congregation designates a competent member who offers services to assist the pastor with relocation. Referral of the pastor to a local realtor is usually most helpful. The realtor will be familiar with local mortgage companies, rates, and other valuable information.

  The pastor should be offered the opportunity to meet with the Council/Board of Directors and the call committee. The purpose of this meeting is to answer questions either the congregation or pastor might wish to raise and to acquaint him with local customs and informal processes of decision-making and communication generally followed in the congregation.

  After installation, the Council/Board of Directors should have ready for the pastor a briefing that includes written summaries of the plans of the congregation and boards and a talent inventory of members. The briefing should consist of any special ministries, such as a list of shut-in members and background data on each.

  Recognize that it will take the pastor several months or more, depending on the size of the congregation, to get to know each member as an individual and understand the skills each has to offer. About six months after the pastor's installation might be an appropriate time to review with him the Diploma of Vocation and the congregation's self-study findings, existing plans, and objectives.

  Throughout the orientation process, the pastor's wife and family should be remembered and included, when appropriate, in orientation events and invited to join or participate in congregational activities and organizations. At the same time, undue expectations should not be placed upon the pastor's wife and family. Related to their congregational life, they should be allowed to exercise their judgment and use the gifts God has given them according to how they feel God leads them.

Providing the pastor and his family with the kinds of assistance described is one of the ways the congregation communicates its love for them, and its thanks to God for having sent them. It

helps them to become productive members of the congregation more quickly. It also helps to establish a level of trust and open communication.

Support for the Pastor's Work and His Family

One of the ingredients of the call is the remuneration and related benefits offered to the pastor for support of his work and his family. Financial items related to the pastoral office in a congregation usually include but are not limited to:

- Concordia Plan Services (Concordia Health and Retirement Plans)
- Automobile allowance
- Housing allowance or provision of a parsonage
- Utility allowance
- Salary
- Social Security (FICA)/403 (B)
- Continuing education allowance
- Library allowance
- Pulpit substitute allowance (Sickness and vacation)
- Sabbatical (three months encouraged after seven years of service)
- PLI (Pastoral Leadership Institute)
- MAP (Ministry Applied Practice) West Coast - for newly ordained pastors

The Pastor's Family Time

The pastor has the same God-given responsibilities toward his wife and family as does every Christian. There must be regularly scheduled time set aside each week for this purpose.

There should also be a definite amount of annual vacation time that the pastor and his family can count on and plan to use as they wish.

Evaluation of the Pastor's Needs

An essential ingredient in the congregation/pastor relationship is to fix responsibility for an annual evaluation of the pastor's needs and that of his family. The review should include recommendations to the Budget Committee for appropriate revisions in each of the elements that relate to the financial support provided to the pastor. He should participate in the evaluation and furnish data regarding expenses. The board's responsibility for initiating the review and preparing recommendations could be placed with the board of elders since this board has a close and continuing working relationship with the pastor.

References

There are several helpful references to serve as a guide to the call committee and congregation in preparing the information referred to in this section. The references below are limited to those generally secured from the Synod, the Michigan District, or the Federal Internal Revenue Service.

- LCMS Concordia Plan Services (888-927-7526)
- LCMS Tax and General Information Bulletin
- Michigan District Salary & Allowance Guideline (https://michigandistrict.org/resources/compensation-guide/)

- Church and Clergy Finance Newsletter
- IRS Publication -- Your Federal Income Tax
- IRS Publication -- Social Security for Members of the Clergy Religious Workers