

Transition Process Handbook

Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod

2019 Edition



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

- Evangelical Lutheran Worship

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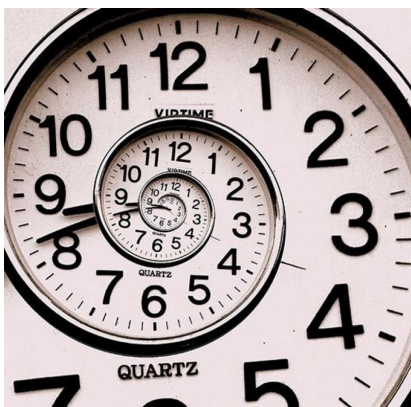
“A Theology of Call” - ELCA Website

Calling a Rostered Minister

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First, there is no way to dictate how exactly how long it will take. Suffice it to say that “it takes time.” It takes time to say goodbye, time to get over the loss, time to set new directions for ministry, time to find just the right leader for those new directions, and time to get off on the right foot. *It is not wise* to be in a rush or have the process driven by some artificially imposed time line. *It is wise* to take whatever time is needed.

Second, even when congregations get to the point of interviewing, they should not be in a hurry. Do not “settle.” Congregations have gone through three or even four rounds of interviewing candidates, have begun to doubt they will ever find the leader they need, and then, all of a sudden, there he/she is! And then, they were glad that they waited; glad that they took the time.

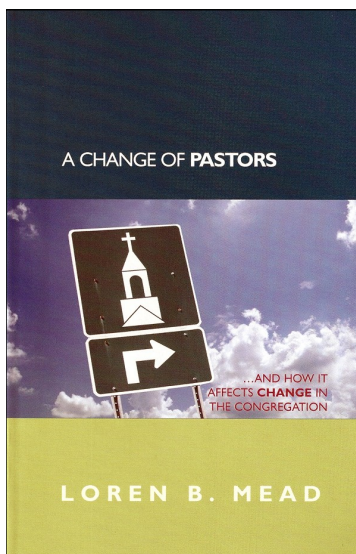
Third, while the above is true, it is also good to remember what Martin Luther said, *"He who wants a perfect church wants no church at all."* Perfect congregations - including yours - do not exist. Likewise, perfect rostered ministers - and perfect spouses, perfect parents, or perfect children - simply do not exist. In their search, congregations should be looking for "a good match" not "a perfect match."

Fourth, just as congregations should not try to "save time" in their search for new leadership, neither should they try to save money! Yes, "squandering money" is bad stewardship; but there are times when "not spending money" can be even worse stewardship. (Jesus said something about this in Matthew 25:14-30.) A call transition is such a time!

Remember: the transition process, and the resulting leadership that is called, will shape the future mission and ministry of the congregation. It is of great consequence and, therefore, is something that congregations, councils, and committees need to do exceedingly well. To "save" several hundred or a few thousand dollars in doing something that impacts the next 10 to 20 years is to be very short-sighted; "penny wise, and pound foolish."

This Handbook and the Seven Sequential Changes

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Amazon.com and should be required reading for all council and call committee members. (Note: This book is about changing pastors; hence the language in the sections below. But it can easily apply to other rostered ministers as well.)

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Section 1: TERMINATION: At some point every pastorate comes to an end. Terminations can be happy or sad, loving or angry, long expected or sudden. There are two sides to every termination, that of the pastor and that of the congregation. Farewells must be expressed as the pastor (rostered minister) exits.

Section 2: DIRECTION FINDING: There is some confusion on the part of the congregation as to what will happen when the pastor leaves – what to do and how to do it, who's in charge, where to find help, etc. What needs to be done until another resident pastor is on the scene?

It is important for the congregation to work with the synod staff to find out the answers to these questions.

Section 3: SELF STUDY: This is the work of the congregation in assessing who and what it is and what it needs to be in the future.

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The formal decisions involve a vote by the Call Committee to recommend a candidate to the congregation, a formal 2/3 majority decision by the congregation at a called congregational meeting, and the assent of the Bishop. On the other side is a fairly personal decision by the pastor and his or her family.

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Along with— and perhaps more important than— the sequential changes are the developmental tasks that need to be intentionally undertaken during the time of change. These tasks are outlined beginning on page 45 of [A Change of Pastors](#).

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identity; possible now as in no other time in its life. It can look to the past for clues to the future, factors which might inhibit the congregation or which need affirming.

The congregation that comes to terms with its history will be more likely to:

- discern and build on the strengths of the past
- get some perspective and power over its characteristic weaknesses
- choose an appropriate pastor (rostered minister) for a new life together.

2. DISCOVERING A NEW IDENTITY: This is a time for taking a fresh look at reality and working at making adjustments in self image. It is a time for members of the congregation to think about what they actually are and not what they think they are or what they used to be. It is a time to discover what others in the community think they are. This new sense of identity should shape the congregation's search for new, ordained leadership.

3. ENABLING NEEDED LEADERSHIP CHANGE: During the transition congregational leaders can be aware of the special opportunities to open doors to new leaders and also to be both appreciative and understanding of those who have been leaders in the past. (Both old and new leaders should be a part of the Call Committee, for example.)

4. RENEWING DENOMINATIONAL LINKAGES: Pastoral change is a time for a congregation to revise and renew its relationship with neighboring ELCA congregations, the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
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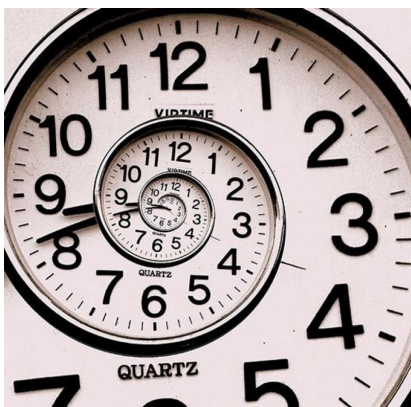
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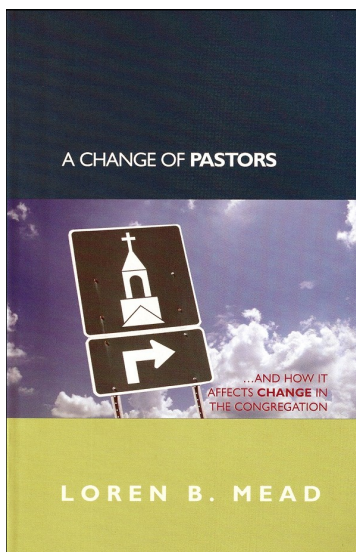
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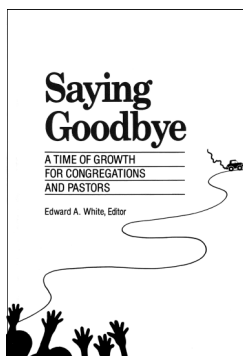
A Rostered Leader's Ministry Comes to an End

There are any number of reasons for a pastor or other rostered leader to leave a congregation or ministry site:

- Retirement.
- After prayerful discernment, he/she has decided that his/her work in a particular context is finished and has accepted another call.
- He/she discerns that God is calling them to a different vocation.
- Death.
- And in rare instances, perhaps there have been actions which violate our visions and expectations for all rostered leaders.

Each of these situations will create any number of emotional and spiritual dynamics within the congregation. It is important that the congregation deal openly and honestly with whatever thoughts and feelings are present surrounding the departure of a pastor or rostered leader.

Excluding the last two bullet points, under normal circumstances it is critical that the congregation take the time to say goodbye to the person they called to serve with them. A "Farewell Liturgy" to be used by the congregation can be found at the end of this section. The book, [Saying Goodbye](#), by Edward A. White, also available at Amazon.com, is most helpful in this area.



"Leaving a pastorate is hard on both congregation and pastor. Learn how to make this transition a growth experience for all. Written for congregations and pastors, Saying Goodbye skillfully weaves accounts from clergy, laity, and educators of seven denominations with White's own insight as a former General Presbyter to create a resource for meaningful and healthy partings. Includes examples of a "farewell" worship service and litany for closure of a ministry." (from The Alban Institute website)

Closure Consultation

Prior to the Pastor's/Leader's departure—preferably sometime during the final 30 days of his/her service—a Closure Consultation will be conducted; usually by the bishop and his/her assistant responsible for the call process in our synod. The consultation consists of three parts; each being about 45 minutes:

1. A conversation with the Pastor/Leader.
2. A conversation with the Pastor/Leader and the Congregational Council.
3. A conversation with the Congregational Council.

This consultation is intended to be a dialogue focused around the congregational ministry during the pastor's/leader's tenure. It is one of the steps designed to help bring closure to the ministry and address some of the emotional dynamics created by his/her departure. It is also an opportunity for the Congregational Council to renew a relationship with synod leaders and gain some preliminary insights into the dynamics of their congregation's transition period.

A Word About Ethical Ministry Boundaries

For a congregation, the most difficult part of saying "Goodbye" to a pastor or rostered staff person is fully understanding the meaning of "Goodbye." The same is often true for the pastor or rostered staff person.

Simply put, when a pastor/rostered leader leaves a congregation, he/she is no longer holds the office of pastor or leader in that congregation. This means that he/she is no longer available for: baptisms, confirmations, weddings, funerals, hospital visits, or any other pastoral acts in that congregation. None.

There reasons for this are at least twofold:

1. A pastor's or staff person's continued involvement in the life of a congregation (or in the lives of congregants) impedes the grief and transition process by fostering a "snapping back" to the past. This will hinder the ability of the new pastor or staff person to fulfill the office to which they are called. The "ghost" of the previous pastor is often difficult enough for his or her successor; "embodied spirits" are even worse!
2. Just as pastor's or staff person's continued "peripheral" involvement in his/her former ministry is unhelpful to that congregation, neither is it helpful or fair to his/her new calling.

It is incumbent upon the Congregational Council, the Transition Coach, and especially the departing pastor/rostered leader to clearly communicate these professional ministry boundaries to the congregation and then maintain them. This is especially difficult in our era of: Facebook, email, texting, Skype, Twitter, and other social electronic means of communication.

Retirement Boundaries

When a pastor retires, there is sometimes the temptation to "retire into" the congregation last served. "Pastor Emeritus" is even a status sometimes officially (or unofficially) granted. However, upon retirement, pastors should never retain membership in the congregation they last served. They must seek membership in another congregation.

It is sometimes relatively easy to point out situations when the presence of a retired clergy

person caused difficulty for their successor. However, even in situations where it seems to be "going well," the truth is that there is no way of knowing the unintentional and often subtle detrimental effects the presence of former pastors and rostered leaders can have on the ability of a congregation to move forward in ministry with its new pastor/leaders. Everybody needs to "move on!"



Tying Up Loose Ends

Per the Constitution of the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, before a pastor leaves a congregation, two documents must be submitted to the Synod Bishop:

1. A certification that all financial obligations have been fulfilled between the congregation and the pastor. (See Page 4, Section 1)
2. A certification that all the congregational records are in good order. (See Page 5, Section 1)

Neither the congregation nor the pastor can move forward in the Transition Process or a Call Process until these documents are received.

CERTIFICATION OF COMPLETION OF ALL FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Per Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod Constitution...

S14.16 *The pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:*

- a. installation in another field, or*
- b. the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.*

Upon the completion of all financial obligations, the pastor and treasurer of the congregation shall complete the form below and forward it to the synod bishop.

+++++

All financial obligations, salary, pension, health, death benefits and allowances, together with Continuing Education funds have been met and paid to the Reverend _____ up to the effective date of termination of services.

Also, satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations has been made by the Reverend to _____ Church.

Treasurer

Date

Pastor

Date

Mail to: Synod Bishop
Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod
12941 I-45 North Freeway, Suite 210
Houston, TX 77060-1243

CERTIFICATION OF COMPLETION OF CONGREGATIONAL RECORDS

Per Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod Constitution...

S14.15 *The parochial records of each congregation shall be kept in a separate book which shall remain its property. The secretary of the congregation shall attest to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his/her hands in good order by a departing pastor before:*

- a. *installation in another field, or*
- b. *the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.*

Before the pastor leaves the present field of service, he/she must bring the records books to the secretary of the congregation for review. Upon finding them in good order, the secretary shall complete the form below and forward it to the synod bishop.

+++++

This is to certify that I have examined the parochial records of

_____ Church,
(congregation)

(town)

and find them in good order.

Secretary of Congregation Council

Date

Mail to: Synod Bishop
Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod
12941 I-45 North Freeway, Suite 210
Houston, TX 77060-1243

Liturgy for Departure of a Pastor from a Congregation

(Insert after the Benediction and before the closing hymn.
Modify as needed for rostered leaders other than a pastor.)

Pastor [P] and President of the Congregation [L] come forward

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

You have served our congregation faithfully for _____ years. You are now leaving our midst. As your fellow members of this congregation we wish to honor your ministry among us and bid you farewell and Godspeed in your new endeavor, bringing closure to your ministry at _____ Lutheran Church .

P: *I thank the members of _____ Lutheran Church for the love, the kindness, and the support shown to me (and my family) during my active ministry among you. I ask forgiveness for the ways I have sinned against you. I am grateful for the ways my ministry has been accepted. As I leave, I carry with me all that I have learned here.*

C: **We receive your thankfulness. We offer you our forgiveness and accept that you now leave to resume your ministry (in another congregation). We express our gratitude for your time among us. We ask forgiveness for the ways we have sinned against you. Your influence on our faith and faithfulness will not leave us at your departure.**

P: *I forgive you and accept your gratitude, trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to God.*

P: *Do you, members of _____ Lutheran Church, release me from my duties as your pastor?*

C: **We do, with God's help.**

L: Do you, Pastor _____, release us, _____ Lutheran Church from turning to you and depending on you?

P: *I do, with God's help.*

L: Let us pray: God, whose everlasting love for all is trustworthy, help each of us to trust the future which rests in your care. The time we were together in your name saw our laughter and tears, our hopes and disappointments. Guide us as we hold these cherished memories but move us in new directions, until that time to come when we are completely one with you and with each other; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

L: Let us bless the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

P: The Lord bless us, defend us from evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

C: **Amen.**

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Who will help?

As a call comes to an end, a number of individuals and groups - as illustrated by the chart below - will play interrelated roles in the transition process.



Congregational Council

It is said that "nature abhors a vacuum." The same can be said about congregations when there is a leadership vacuum. Many times all sorts of people and dynamics will rush in - overtly or covertly - to fill the void. Therefore, during the interim period, the function of the council is to:

1. Lead the congregation with a unified faithful and hopeful voice
2. Arrange for pastoral leadership—or other staff leadership—during the interim period.
3. Keep the focus on the mission of the congregation.
4. Oversee existing congregational ministries.
5. Communicate with the bishop's office and the congregation.

Bishop’s Office

The bishop - at times through the assistant to the bishop responsible for the transition process - will provide support and assistance to the congregational council and the congregation in the following ways:

1. Hold an Exit Interview, as previously described.
2. Appoint an interim pastor; as indicated in the Model Constitution for Congregations:
**C9.06. At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.*

Interim Pastor

There are three distinct ways of providing pastoral leadership during the transitional period: 1) Stated Supply Pastors, 2) Interim Pastors, and 3) Intentional Interim Pastors.

1. **Stated Supply**: These pastors preside at worship, preach and teach on Sunday morning, provide a minimum of pastoral care for the seriously ill or those in crisis, and whatever other *pastoral* tasks are needed in a particular location.
2. **Interim Pastors**: These pastors contract to provide pastoral services on either a part or fulltime basis. This may include Sunday worship, teaching, visitation, and administrative oversight.
3. **Intentional Interim Pastors**: These part or full time pastors who are trained to work with a congregation in a very intentional way to prepare for the next regular called pastor. Intentional Interim Pastors are essential in congregational settings where there is conflict, the previous pastor left under duress or because of misconduct, there are staffing issues to be resolved, or following a “long term” pastorate.

The Bishop’s Office will gladly help a congregation discern the type of interim pastor that might be most helpful.

All interim pastors are under contract with the Congregational Council. It is important for all parties to agree upon the exact nature of the responsibilities of the pastor and the congregation. Contract forms are available on the synod website: www.GulfCoastSynod.org

**Stated Supply, Interim, or Intentional Interim Pastors
CANNOT and WILL NOT be available
as a candidate for a regular call to the congregation.**

Prayer Team

One of the things that makes a call process different is that it is a time of spiritual discernment, both on the part of the congregation and the rostered ministers. Spiritual discernment needs to be undergirded and surrounded with prayer.

- Four to six people who gather at least twice a month to pray for the council, congregation, transition team, call committee, interim pastor, and the prospective pastor/minister.
- May lead prayer services with the congregation during the process.
- May solicit prayer requests from the congregation.
- Continue to pray for the new pastor/rostered minister when he/she arrives.

Call Committee

As the "Search Phase" (see Introduction, Page 3) begins, a Call Committee is either appointed by the congregational council or elected by the congregation; check your congregational constitution.

- Members of the Call Committee should not be persons currently serving on the Congregation Council; neither should the lay president of the Congregation Council be the chair of the Call Committee.
- The Call Committee should reflect a cross-section of the congregation, assuring that gender, age, ethnic/racial identity, and length of congregational membership are all represented.
- Members of the Call Committee must understand that they are to represent the best interests of the entire congregation's vision and ministry. No one sits of the committee as a "delegate" of a particular demographic or group.
- Employees, staff members, or their families should not be on the Call Committee.
- The Congregation Council should decide if there will be alternate members should someone need be replaced; and, if so, how and when would they have voice or vote?
- The Congregational Council will need to establish a budget for the Call Committee.
- The Call Committee is disbanded when the new rostered minister is installed.

The Call Committee is perhaps the most important group that is appointed/elected to serve a congregation, and committee members indicate that they quickly recognize the importance of their service. More about the Call Committee will be found in "Section 4: Search."

Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead ...

When the Call Committee fills out the Ministry Site Profile (MSP) they will discover this question on the last page:

19. DISCERNMENT PROCESS AND ADOPTION

Please describe the process used to gather information, formulate responses, and officially adopt this Ministry Site Profile. (Approximately 100 words maximum)

Important Note: This form has been converted to an online web-based form, please use this for preparation only. You must submit the official application via the Leader Portal. See <http://www.tlscs.org/lead> for more details.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America MINISTRY SITE PROFILE
God's work. Our hands.

The Ministry Site Profile (MSP) is intended for use by congregations and church-related organizations that are seeking to call or Ordain or Re-ordain a minister. (Associate in Ministry, Ordained Minister or Ordained Minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or First Call candidates for rostered ministry. Congregations must complete the entire Ministry Site Profile. Church-related organizations may, with the concurrence of the synod bishop, complete only the required sections (2-4 and 6-10). Once complete, this form is submitted electronically to your synod bishop for review and posting to the "ministry opportunities" listing on the ECA web site.

Date Completed: _____

PART I WHO WE ARE

1. Name and Location

CONGREGATION/MINISTRY POINT/FAMILY ORGANIZATION NAME LOCATION STATE

CITY/STATE/ZIP COUNTRY

PHONE TYPE OF AMBLYOTICIST YEAR ORGANIZED

2. Contact Information

ADDRESS LINE1 ADDRESS LINE2 CITY/STATE/ZIP COUNTRY

E-MAIL WEBSITE PHONE FAX

Chairperson of Congregation or Head of the Organization

NAME

ADDRESS LINE1 ADDRESS LINE2 CITY/STATE/ZIP COUNTRY

DAY PHONE EVENING PHONE CELL PHONE FAX

E-MAIL

Chairperson of Call or Search Committee

NAME

ADDRESS LINE1 ADDRESS LINE2 CITY/STATE/ZIP COUNTRY

DAY PHONE EVENING PHONE CELL PHONE FAX

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The question assumes that an intentional visioning process is used in searching for the appropriate rostered minister; a process that is even more critical when calling a senior pastor or a solo pastor.

The MSP entails four areas:

1. The congregation.
2. The community the congregation serves.
3. The vision for serving that community.
4. The leader the congregation needs to serve that community.

It is best to involve as much of the congregation/ministry site as possible in the creation of "vision for mission" that goes into the creation of the MSP. It is helpful to the Call Committee and the entire process if they can receive as much information as possible concerning the above areas; especially areas 2 and 3. Therefore, the Interim Pastor and the Call Committee should create a strategy that will be used to gather that data and information. Some congregations will appoint a Transition Team to assist the Call Committee in preparing for and completing the MSP.

Current Mission and Vision Statements

The process should first take into consideration any present vision and mission statements or long range plans that the congregation/ministry site may already have adopted or have in place. Some questions that might be used in evaluating existing vision/mission statements and plans:

1. How long ago were they created? Has the congregation and/or community changed significantly since their creation?
2. Are they specific enough to shape a vision for mission appropriate to *this* congregation and its context; or, are they generic? (e.g. "Sharing the love of Jesus!")
3. Are they presently helping shape the congregation's ministry? Do they show up in reality, or do they just exist on paper? Is the congregation really using them?

If existing vision mission statements are found to be effective, they should be used in shaping the MSP. If not, they should be forgotten!

Understanding Systemic Change

One of problems congregations have in successfully establishing a vision/mission and calling the appropriate leader to help them fulfill it is that they are often unwilling to change their congregational system. The same is true of growth. Congregations say that they want to grow but are unwilling to embrace or acknowledge the changes that growth will require. And, as W. Edwards Deming has said, *"Your system is perfectly designed to give you the results you're getting."*

The following four paradigms are often used to describe congregational sizes and systems. The numbers - "Under 50" - are the average weekly worship attendance. But don't pay too much strict attention to them; more important is to recognize the system that a congregation has in place and how the pastors and leaders are expected to function in that system.



- Family Church - Personal Ownership
- Clergy for Traditional Pastoral Care
- Very High Pastoral Turnover
- Often Survive by not Taking Pastors Seriously
- Toughest Place for New Pastors Right Out of Seminary, Therefore ...

In this "system" the pastor functions as a caretaker or "in house chaplain" for the congregants. Decisions are often made by the "leaders" - who may or may not be among the elected leadership. The most important thing may be "peace in the family" and the most "disposable person is often the pastor.



- Pastor is Central
- Pastor Must Delegate ... Or Else
- Formula Size for Clergy Burnout
- Expectations High, Personal
- Oppressive Time Demands on Pastor
- Growth Often Depends on Popularity of Pastor
- Hard on Pastor's Spouse and Children
- Most Churches are this Size

In this "system" the pastor functions as the "hub." Pastoral participation and leadership is expected in most groups and programs/activities. Visitation is expected to be done by a pastor. Congregants expect a personal relationship with the pastor. A pastor can have some level of personal relationship with 150 people; beyond that the system cannot grow.



- Many Leader Cells - Many Programs
- Lay Leadership Vital
- Clergy Still Central, But Role Shifts
- Administration: Recruiting, Planning, Training, Evaluating, Coordinating, ...
- Pastor has Little Time for "Just Stopping in for Coffee in the Kitchen"
- Pastor Helps People Arrive at Consensus
- Pastor Is Also A Motivator and Trust Builder

In this sized system, people identify with a program or other ministry and/or fellowship group. The pastor's/minister's role shifts to being an equipper of leaders. More time is spent on staff development and support. Visitation and other "pastoral practices" are carried out by trained laity. The shift from "pastoral" to "program" is the most difficult.

What this means is that, in setting a vision/mission and plans for growth, congregations - especially patriarchal/matriarchal and pastoral sized congregations - must have a serious and frank discussion of how they expect their leadership to function. Both the MSP and Letter of Call require a congregation to answer, *"What exactly are you asking your this pastor/leader to do? How do you realistically expect them to function in accomplishing those goals? How will you support them in these changes?"*

A resource to help congregations move from Pastoral to Program - and many congregations are of pastoral size - is the book [Raising the Roof](#), which is available from Amazon.

More information on congregational size and systems can be found in Section 9 or [online](#).



- Quality of Worship High Priority
- Music Program Top Notch
- Head of Staff Spends Quality Time on Sermon Prep and Worship Planning
- Has Head Pastor as Symbol of Unity and Stability
- More Complex Than Program Church
- Multiple Staff Collegial, Yet Diverse
- Staff Must Have Fun Working Together
- Leaders Generate Energy, Momentum

There may be several pastors/ministers on the staff. The senior pastor will focus on preaching and excellence in worship, and also on creative vision and mission. Small groups become very important. It isn't necessary for everyone to know everyone, but everyone must know and be known by someone.

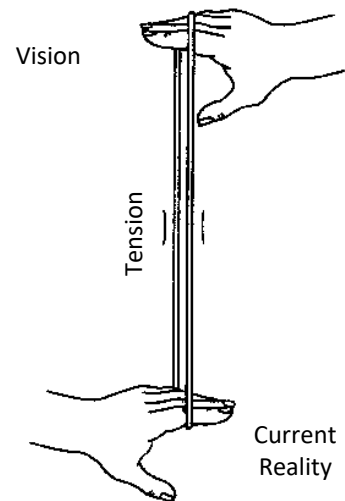
Engaging the Congregation and Community

The affront of having a sequential change or a section titled "Self Study" is that we think that there is little reason to study ourselves. We think we know ourselves. But the truth is that we are often not good at taking an honest appraisal of ourselves. We see ourselves "in a mirror dimly."

Many times the problem isn't with our vision; rather, it's that we have poorly assessed our current reality. When the tension between what is - who we really are - and what we envision - who we aspire to be - becomes too great our dreams "snap apart" and we can become despondent. Visions and goals always need to be realistic and attainable.

The other reality is that, while we often see ourselves "in a mirror dimly," we often see the world around us through rose colored glasses, with blinders, or with tunnel vision. In short, we often see what we want to see rather than seeing things as they really are

So, an honest self study of the congregation is crucial in the call process. But that self study is to no end unless there is also a study and exploration of the community; the context in which God has placed the congregation. A good resource for doing this is "[Tune In](#)". Information gathered in steps 1 through 5 should be processed by the Call Committee and other congregational leadership. It should then be shared with the congregation, helping to shape an agreed upon vision/mission that can be articulated on the MSP.



Demographics and Trends

As the self study is done, it's important to take a look at demographics and trends, both in the congregation and community. Congregational data can be found on the [ELCA website](#). Look up your congregation and click on "Full Trend Report For This Congregation." Some of this data will be required on the MSP, but it is also important to interpret the data. "What do these statistics say about us, for

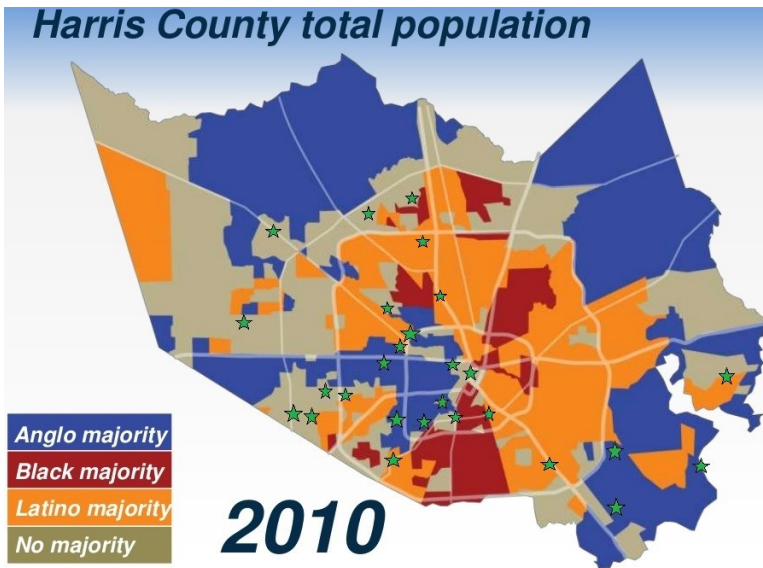
better or for worse? Who have we really been? Who really are we? Do these statistics suggest that some change needs to happen?"

Equally important is to take a look at the community around the congregation or ministry site,

the community that Jesus calls us to serve. Forget the "conventional wisdom!" Go to hard demographic statistics. A good website for census data is [Proximity One](#), although there are many other good sites online.

Also explore the "religious data" for your community or ministry area. Go to the [Association of Religion Data Archives](#) (ARDA) and find out affiliation statistics for your county. The data below is for Washington County, Texas. Even in that more rural area, "unclaimed" is the

largest group. [Religious Congregations and Membership Study](#) is a related site.



Finally, when examining demographics and trends it is important to go to your local Independent School District and look at the student demographic statistics. This is especially true of elementary school statistics. Try the ISD website or go to [The Texas Tribune](#).

For example, Hermes Elementary in La Grange is presently over 43% Hispanic, while the entire school system - including a middle and high school - is almost 39%. What about the schools in your congregation's ministry area? What do these trends mean for your congregation's vision for ministry? Do your church hallways look anything like local school hallways?

Location	African American	White	Hispanic
Hermes Elementary	9.8%	43%	43.4%
La Grange ISD	9.9%	48%	38.8%
State of Texas	12.6%	21%	52.4%

*Data based on 2016-2017 School Year



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Forming a Call Committee

When the Interim Pastor and Church Council sense that the time is right, the congregation will form a Call Committee. To review some of the material already discussed in Section 2:

- The constitution governing your congregation will prescribe either appointment or election of such a committee. It may also stipulate the number of people to be on the committee
- Members of the Call Committee should not be persons currently serving on the Congregation Council, and neither should the Lay President of the Congregation Council during a pastoral transition. It is also recommended that the Lay President of the Congregation Council not be the chair of the Call Committee.
- The composition of the Call Committee should reflect a cross section of the congregation, assuring that a diversity of gender, age, ethnic/racial identity and length of congregational membership are all represented.
- Each member of the Call Committee must understand that he/she is to represent the best interests of the entire congregation’s vision and ministry. No one sits of the committee as a “delegate” of a particular demographic or group.
- Employees, staff members and their families should not be on the Call Committee.
- The Congregation Council needs to decide if there will be alternate members should someone need to be replaced, and, if so, how and when should they have voice or vote?
- The Congregation Council will need to establish a budget for the Call Committee.

Call Committee Structure

Prayer is an important activity for the Call Committee and the entire congregation throughout this process. Call Committee members are encouraged to commit themselves to pray for one another and for the work of the Holy Spirit among them as they seek to discern God’s will for their congregation. Special prayer at worship and during other meetings of the congregation is encouraged. When the Call Committee is selected, the names of the members are made public, with request that special prayers be made on their behalf.

The Call Committee Chairperson can be appointed by the Congregation Council or be elected by the Committee itself. The leaders include a Chair, Recording Secretary, and a Correspondent. It is advisable to have one Congregation Council member as a liaison/advisor on the Call Committee.

- **CHAIR:** convenes meetings, sets meeting agendas, may be the primary contact with candidates, will likely also be the contact person with the Bishop's Office, and oversees the Call Process.
- **SECRETARY:** keeps a record of Call Committee meetings. While motions may not necessarily be made, committee assignments need to be recorded for future reference.

The Secretary may also be responsible for final preparation of the Congregational Mission Profile. If not the secretary, it is best to have ONE person responsible for all electronic data entry and electronic submissions.

- **CORRESPONDENT:** is responsible for written communication between candidates and the committee (letters informing candidates of committee's time line and the interview process to be used, confirming invitations, travel arrangements, thank you notes, and letters informing candidates of decisions reached), sends copies of correspondence to the synod office. Much of this may be done electronically. He/she may also write newsletter articles, notes for Sunday bulletins, etc. which keep the congregation informed of committee's progress.

**The positions of secretary and correspondent may be combined.*

Confidentiality

In the first meeting of the Call Committee the members should clearly agree upon and covenant with one another about confidentiality. Members need to know that they can speak openly and frankly concerning issues that are discussed about the congregation and the candidates. The committee needs to practice both:

Openness

Reporting regularly (weekly) to Council and congregation helps keep everyone on the same level of understanding about the process.

AND

Holding Confidence

The Call Committee must keep all verbal and written information about each and every candidate strictly confidential.

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 with its recommendation to the Congregation Council. It is important 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 healthy boundaries, not only with the congregation at large, but also with those in their household or place of work.

The reasons for this are at least twofold:

1. The congregations of candidates are (most likely) unaware that they are interviewing. If a name should get out and back to a candidate’s congregation it could severely damage his or her ability to do effective ministry at that site. Never underestimate the “connectedness” - who knows whom - within the Lutheran community!
2. You run the risk of turning the whole congregation into a “call committee.” People will be second guessing why you decided what about whom without having all the information - “the rest of the story” - before them. The whole congregation will meet the final candidate when the time is right.

Communication

While confidentiality is important, that does not mean secrecy! Every means ought to be utilized to keep the members of the congregation informed about the Call Committee's work and progress. There must be as much transparency as possible. Consider using:

1. **Newsletter articles** explaining the Call Process to the congregation; with follow-up articles each time another stage in the process is reached.
2. Notes in the **Sunday bulletin** announcing that the Call Committee is meeting helps keep the congregation informed of progress.
3. **Temple Talks** by a member of the Call Committee to update the congregation on a weekly basis might also be welcomed. (Even if the report is “nothing has changed from last week” - it is very helpful to let people know what is happening in the Call Process. Also, from one week to the next, you will not be reporting to exactly the same audience).
4. **Emails** to announce open meetings.
5. Many congregations also have a call process update section on their **webpage** and/or **Facebook** page.
6. **Sunday/Weekday Adult and Youth Forums** can be used to make sure the congregation understands the Call Process; and to update them along the way. This format invites interaction and feedback.

As you keep the congregation informed:

- Always familiarize them with the process.
- Keep them apprised of progress.
- Spell out the preferred process for communicating with the members of the Call Committee

With the exception of confidential materials, there is no such thing as too much information.

Call Committee Budget

One of the first tasks of the Call Committee is to establish a budget. This is done in concert with the Congregation Council. Some of the items that need to be included in the budget are:

- Travel expenses for committee members (if any)
- Travel expenses for candidates.
- Office expenses (photocopying, data entry, postage, virtual media, etc.)
- Honorarium and expenses for the practice/mock interviews.
- Miscellaneous expenses.

Although some of these expenses are difficult to accurately determine ahead of time, especially travel expenses for face to face interviews and a congregational “meet and greet” for the final candidate, every effort should be made to set aside the needed finances for the call process. Once again, it is “penny wise and pound foolish” to be unduly concerned about saving money in this process. Do not dismiss considering a candidate because “they live too far away.” He or she may be exactly what the Holy Spirit has in mind!

Note: Although negotiating the moving expenses for your newly called pastor is not the responsibility of the Call Committee, the Congregation Council and Finance Committee must be aware that the congregation is responsible for the moving expenses of your new pastor. Moving costs have increased dramatically over the last few years, and congregational leaders often experience “sticker shock” when faced with the moving bill.

Calling an Associate Pastor or Deacon

Calling an associate pastor or a deacon follows the same process as calling a senior or solo pastor; with one significant prerequisite: the senior pastor must play a key role in the selection of the final candidate. Whether this means actually sitting on the committee or joining with the committee at critical junctures can be decided by the council and senior pastor. However, to call an associate or rostered lay person to the congregation’s ministry team without the input and oversight of the leader of the ministry team - the senior pastor - is a recipe for disaster.

In addition to participating in all the initial phone/virtual interviews and in the face to face interviews, the senior pastor may also want to:

- Have a personal initial phone/virtual interview with candidates.
- Spend significant one-on-one time with candidates that are brought in for face to face interviews.
- Have his/her own conversations with the candidates’ references, especially the candidates’ bishops.

- Work directly with the Bishop’s office in reviewing candidates’ rostered minister profiles.

But, bottom line, the senior pastor’s discernment must be afforded the level of advice and consent due his/her office. as to: 1) whether they can work with a particular candidate; and, 2) whether that candidate is a good fit for the vision/mission congregation.



Call Committee Installation

It is important that the ministry of those who have been selected to serve on the Call Committee be recognized by the congregation. They will spend numerous hours in meetings and expend significant energy over many months during the course of their service. It is a ministry requiring dedication and commitment.

The following is an order appropriate to installing the Call Committee. It should take place at every service that a congregation has during the week. It can be placed in the service so as to best fit the worship and committee members’ schedules.

Call Committee Installation Service

The Congregational Lay President addresses the congregation:

L: Dear Christian Friends: Baptized into the priesthood of Christ, we are all called to offer ourselves to the Lord of the Church in thanksgiving for what he has done and continues to do for us. It is our privilege to recognize and support those who are engaged in the work of this congregation, especially those selected to serve as members of the Call Committee.

As a representative of the congregation reads a brief description of the ministry of the Call Committee and the names of the persons selected to serve in that ministry, the Call Committee members come forward.

L: Having offered yourselves to serve on the Call Committee of this congregation, will you follow our Lord's example of humble service?

Call Committee Response: Yes, with God's help.

L: Let us pray: O God of love, your Son washed the feet of his disciples as a sign of servanthood. Uphold those who follow his example of humble service, and strengthen them in their faith. Guide and direct these servants who will lead this congregation in the selection of the one who will be called as (Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor, Deacon). Give them wisdom and discernment. Let your Holy Spirit guide and direct them in all that they do. Help us all to faithfully serve you in thought, word, and deed, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

L: For all who offer themselves in your name, we give thanks, O God. Give them the joy of service, and constant care and guidance. Help us all to be both willing servants and thankful recipients of ministry, that your name be glorified, your people live in peace, and your will be done, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

The MSP

The development of the MSP is as much for helping the congregation clarify its vision/mission as it is for communicating that vision/mission to a potential candidate. It enables a congregation to:

- review the congregation’s life and mission as the Church, the Body of Christ.
- evaluate the congregation’s present strengths.
- identify specific areas where the congregation needs to strengthen its ministry
- understand the needs of the community in which it exists.
- specify resources necessary to fulfill the mission of the congregation, including special mission tasks in the parish community.
- arrive at a new understanding of the mission of the congregation.
- identify the gifts that are most important for the next rostered leader to possess.

Secondarily, the MSP:

- provides the Call Committee with basic information and a description of leadership strengths and needs which will guide their work.
- assists the Bishop in recommending candidates to be considered by the Call Committee.
- provides a picture of the congregation for the candidates as they consider serving the congregation. Therefore, it is important that the profile be a thorough and honest reflection of the community, the congregation, and the congregation’s mission.

Getting Started

The person on the Call Committee that will be responsible for all electronic data entry should go to the [ELCA website](#) and follow the instructions under “Creating an Account.” This person should print out a blank MSP for every member of the committee, but retain the electronic version on their computer so that they can fill out and edit as the process moves forward.

The Ministry Site Profile - a blank MSP is at the end of Section 4.2 - has four parts:

- Part I - Who We Are Information (Items 1 through 5)
- Part II - Our Vision for Mission (Items 6 through 9)
- Part III - Leadership Needs (Items 10 through 17)
- Part IV - Commentary (Items 18 through 20)

“Writing by committee” is a tedious process. It may be best for the call committee to divide into smaller groups to work on various sections of the MSP. The committee then has something that it can discuss and edit as a large group.

As the Call Committee completes the Ministry Site Profile, it should be in consultation with the Congregation Council or other lay leaders. After completion, the profile should be reviewed by the Congregation Council to make certain there is agreement on the congregation’s mission and the gifts needed in the new rostered leader.

After the MSP is created, many congregations have found that it is helpful to hold several “congregational forums” to go over the MSP with people that are interested. These forums are only for sharing information. Gathering information from the congregation should have been done prior to completing the MSP (Section 3).

After the MSP has been submitted, the person responsible for electronic data will need to log into your account, download the reference form, and forward the reference form to the reference that is listed in Item 21. The reference form MUST remain in and be submitted in electronic format. Hard copies will not suffice.

Other considerations

As potential candidates consider your MSP, be aware that in this electronic age it will not be their only window into the reality of your congregation/ministry site. Other things to consider:

1. What does your congregation’s website look like and say about your vision and mission? Is it up to date?
2. Does your congregation have a Facebook page? What does it look like? How is it used?
3. What do your facilities look like from the outside? Go to [Google Maps](#) and see the most recent views of your property and surrounding community.
4. What do your facilities look like on the inside? When candidates come for on-site face to face interviews, what will their impressions be?
5. If your congregation is “Googled” what comes up? Nothing? “No news” is no longer “good news.”

We live in a time of increasing transparency for both congregations and candidates. Is your congregation’s web presence a good representation of your vision and ministry?

A walk through the MSP

Part I: Who We Are

#1: Make sure you use your congregational ID number.

#2: Provide as much contact information as possible, especially email addresses and cell phone numbers. This will greatly improve communication..

#3: Consult your last Congregation Statistical Report and [demographic reports](#) for your ministry ZIP Codes; also use resources suggested in Section 3.

#4: Use the most recent figures. Mission Support is the congregation’s support of the ministry of the ELCA and the synod. It does not include local benevolence.

#5: You may have to define your community boundaries if you are in a larger urban/suburban area. Be creative, yet honest, in your answers.

Part II: Our Vision for Mission

#6: Fill out bullets after some discussion. They should not be the opinion of a few.

#7: These have to do with context. How is your congregation effectively “rooted” in your community? The results of the Tune In Process will provide valuable information for this.

#8: When you submit your MSP, this paragraph will be automatically lifted from the profile and posted for all potential candidates to view online. It’s your “billboard.”

#9: Provide good objective references that will “tell it like it is” - not how you wish it would be.

Part III: Leadership Needs

#10: Fairly straightforward. What languages would be helpful in your mission, not only to your congregation, but to your community?

#11: Candidates have the same list on their Rostered Minister Profile (RMP). What do you mean or envision with each of the five you select?

#12: As with the previous list in #11, how will you make your choices? Are you looking inward at the “needs of those already here” or looking outward “at the needs of those who aren’t here yet?”

#13: The first five areas of focus will be used in the Letter of Call and can provide a good basis for a ministry review after the first year. Are the areas/goals specific, attainable, measurable?

#14, #15, #16: The “Maximum Defined Compensation” (salary/housing and Social Security offset) needs to be determined by the Congregational Council. Our synod’s compensation guidelines are in Section 5. There is also a “compensation package” worksheet you may find helpful.

Part IV: Commentary

Commentary - Utilize the links; very helpful. This is also a good section to make clear what you mean or envision by the five “Top Ministry Tasks.” What will it look like when someone is fulfilling a given task?

#17: The “Seven Reflections on Ministry” are optional, but may be useful to candidates as they try to discern their calling. (Not many congregations use them.) You may fill out whichever you think most germane. There are “Twelve Reflections on Ministry” on the candidate’s RLP.

#18: This is the section that was mentioned at the beginning of Section 3.

#19: This should be:

Pastor Blair Lundborg
Assistant to the Bishop for Leadership
blair@gulfcoastsynod.org
281-873-5665

#20: This reference, unlike those in #9, will be asked to submit a brief written “Ministry Site Characteristics” questionnaire. Make certain that this reference is willing to do that—and that they will be objective.

“The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.”

- Ephesians 4:11-13



The Ministry Site Profile (MSP) is intended for use by congregations and church-related organizations that are seeking to call an Ordained or lay rostered minister (Associate in Ministry, Deaconess or Diaconal Minister) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or First Call candidates for rostered ministry. Congregations must complete the entire Ministry Site Profile. Church-related organizations may, with the concurrence of the synod bishop, complete only the required sections (1-4 and 8-19). Once complete, this form is submitted electronically to your synod bishop for review and posting to the "ministry opportunities" listing on the ELCA web Site.

Date Completed:

PART I WHO WE ARE

1. Name and Location

CONGREGATION/ MULTIPLE POINT PARISH/ ORGANIZATION	NAME	CONG ID
CITY, STATE, ZIP	COUNTRY	
SYNOD	TYPE OF MINISTRY SITE	YEAR ORGANIZED
SIZE OF COMMUNITY		

2. Contact Information

ADDRESS LINE I	ADDRESS LINE II	CITY, STATE, ZIP	COUNTRY
E-MAIL	WEB SITE	PHONE	FAX

Chairperson of Congregation or Head of the Organization

NAME			
ADDRESS LINE I	ADDRESS LINE II	CITY, STATE, ZIP	COUNTRY
DAY PHONE	EVENING PHONE	CELL PHONE	FAX

E-MAIL

Chairperson of Call or Search Committee

NAME			
ADDRESS LINE I	ADDRESS LINE II	CITY, STATE, ZIP	COUNTRY
DAY PHONE	EVENING PHONE	CELL PHONE	FAX



E-MAIL

3. Demographics

Language Spoken

In the congregation/ organization

PRIMARY LANGUAGE	SECOND LANGUAGE	THIRD LANGUAGE
------------------	-----------------	----------------

In the surrounding community

PRIMARY LANGUAGE	SECOND LANGUAGE	THIRD LANGUAGE
------------------	-----------------	----------------

Race/ Ethnicity (In the Congregation)

LARGEST (%)	SECOND (%)	THIRD (%)	FOURTH (%)
-------------	------------	-----------	------------

Race/ Ethnicity (Surrounding Community)

LARGEST (%)	SECOND (%)	THIRD (%)	FOURTH (%)
-------------	------------	-----------	------------

Gender comparison

Age distribution

MALE (%)	FEMALE (%)	19 YEARS OR YOUNGER (%)	20 - 34 (%)	35 - 49 (%)	50 - 65 (%)	OVER 65 (%)
----------	------------	-------------------------	-------------	-------------	-------------	-------------

Number of Paid Staff

CLERGY	LAY ROSTERED	OTHER PROFESSIONALS	SECRETARIAL SUPPORT	CUSTODIAL SUPPORT	OTHER
--------	--------------	---------------------	---------------------	-------------------	-------

Congregational Information

AVE WEEKLY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE	AVE ATTENDANCE IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	PARISH TYPE
-------------------------------	---------------------------------------	-------------

Distance members live from church facilities:

1/2 MILE OR LESS (%)	1/2 - 1 MILE (%)	1 - 3 MILES (%)	MORE THAN 3 MILES (%)
----------------------	------------------	-----------------	-----------------------

Community Type

- | | | |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Bedroom community | <input type="radio"/> College or University | <input type="radio"/> Farming |
| <input type="radio"/> Inner City | <input type="radio"/> Mining/logging | <input type="radio"/> Ranching |
| <input type="radio"/> Industrial | <input type="radio"/> Resort | <input type="radio"/> Retirement |



4. Budget of the Congregation/ Organization

LAST FISCAL YEAR	
TOTAL BUDGET FOR THE LAST FISCAL YEAR	TOTAL DEBT OF THE CONGREGATION/ ORGANIZATION AT THE END OF THE LAST FISCAL YEAR
MISSION SUPPORT TO THE ELCA/ SYNOD FOR THE LAST FISCAL YEAR	TOTAL SAVINGS, RESERVES, ENDOWMENT AT THE END OF THE LAST FISCAL YEAR

5. Trends in the community Context of the Congregation or Organization

Characteristics Write a description of your community in terms of socio-economic status, demographics, primary areas of employment and lifestyle. The Demographic ZIP Code report for your primary ZIP codes may be helpful.

Context List three ways that the community in which you are located has been challenged by change and transition in the last three to five years.

Trends List three changes or trends within the congregation or organization which have occurred in the last three to five years.

Programs Describe your congregation's or organization's current programs for mission and ministry.



Goals

If there is a Strategic Plan in place for the congregation or organization; what are the primary goals to which you are committed?

Energy

What is your congregation or organization really excited about right now?

Partnership

How does this congregation or organization see itself as a member and active participant in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the synod?

PART II: OUR VISION FOR MISSION

6. Ministry Site Characteristics

		AS A COMMUNITY					
		A LOT LIKE US	A LITTLE LIKE US	A LOT LIKE US	A LITTLE LIKE US		
We tend to be formal and programmatic.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		We tend to be informal and spontaneous.	
We have clearly defined goals and plans for our future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		We have no stated goals or plans.	
We are racially and economically diverse.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		We are demographically homogeneous.	
OUR LEADERSHIP STYLE							
We welcome ideas that are provoking and challenging.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		We prefer ideas that are tried and true.	
We rely on our leaders for directions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		We rely on group decision-making.	
We have learned how to use conflict constructively.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		We tend to perceive conflict as something destructive.	
OUR PROGRAMMING							
Our facilities are often used by community groups.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>		Our facilities are only used for our activities.	



- | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| We train people to minister outside our walls. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | We train people to minister inside our walls. |
| We focus on ideas and beliefs. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | We focus on skills and action. |

OUR THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

- | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| We are obviously Lutheran in identify and practice. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | We are less obvious about our Lutheran heritage. |
| We participate in synod and ELCA activities. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | We are not very active in the synod and ELCA. |
| We focus on Biblical studies and doctrine. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | We focus on contemporary issues and topics. |

7. Purpose, Giftedness and Mission

Purpose

How does this congregation or organization understand its reason for being in the light of God's call to mission and service? Who are you? Why are you here?

Giftedness

What are your gifts and resource for fulfilling this purpose? What are the congregation's or organizations top three assets and how are they being used? Are there obstacles that must be overcome to be able to use these gifts and accomplish the mission?

Mission

In light of the way you have described your ministry context in this Ministry Site Profile, what are the top three mission priorities which, if accomplished, hold the most promise for the continued development of this ministry?

8. Summary Description

Please describe your ministry setting and position opening in 75 words or less. This is the brief description that will be publicized.



9. References

Synodical Bishop

NAME	SYNOD	E-MAIL	
DAY PHONE	EVENING PHONE	CELL	FAX

Inside Congregation or organization

NAME	ORGANIZATION AND TITLE	E-MAIL	
DAY PHONE	EVENING PHONE	CELL	FAX

Outside Congregation or organization

NAME	ORGANIZATION AND TITLE	E-MAIL	
DAY PHONE	EVENING PHONE	CELL	FAX

Member of the ELCA Clergy roster

NAME	ORGANIZATION AND TITLE	E-MAIL	
DAY PHONE	EVENING PHONE	CELL	FAX

Anyone else who knows your setting well

NAME	SYNOD	E-MAIL	
DAY PHONE	EVENING PHONE	CELL	FAX



PART III: LEADERSHIP NEEDS

10. The Leader we Seek

Roster Type:

- Associate in Ministry
- Deaconess
- Diaconal Minister
- Ordained Clergy
- In Candidacy/First Call

POSITION TYPE

EDUCATION

FULL TIME/PART TIME

Language Proficiencies

PRIMARY LANGUAGE (PROFICIENCY)

SECOND LANGUAGE (PROFICIENCY)

THIRD LANGUAGE (PROFICIENCY)

Experience:

- 0-3 years
- 4-9 years
- 10 -15 years
- 16-20 years
- 21 + years

11. Top Five Ministry Tasks

- Administration
- Children's Ministry
- Campus / Young Adult Ministry
- Chaplaincy
- Children's Ministry
- Christian Education
- Communications/ Media
- Community Organizing
- Conflict Management
- Counseling/ Social Work
- Early Childhood Administration
- Ecumenical Work
- Evangelism/ Mission
- Financial Management
- Global Service
- Innovation / Creativity
- Interim Ministry
- Interpret Theology
- Inter-personal Climate
- Ministry in Crisis
- Ministry in Daily Life
- Ministry with Seniors
- Multicultural Ministry
- Music / Worship / Arts
- Outdoor/ Camping Ministry
- Parish Nurse / Health
- Participant in the Larger Church
- Pastoral Care and Visitation
- Preaching / Worship Self Care / Family Life
- Public Policy / Advocacy
- Recruit and Equip Leaders
- Self Care / Family Life
- Small Group Ministry
- Social Ministry
- Spiritual Formation / Direction
- Stewardship
- Strategic Mission Planning
- Teaching
- Volunteer Coordination
- Youth and Family Ministry

12. Gifts for Ministry



Top Priority	Very Helpful
Help people develop their spiritual life.	
Help people understand and act upon issues of social justice.	
Provide care and nurture.	
Be active in visitation of members and non-members.	
Be effective in working with children.	
Build a sense of community among the people with whom he/she works.	
Help others develop their leadership abilities and skills for ministry.	
Be an effective administrator.	
Be an effective communicator.	
Be an effective teacher.	
Encourage support of the Church's wider mission.	
Work regularly in the development of stewardship growth.	
Be active in ecumenical relationships.	
Be effective in working with youth.	
Organize people for community action.	
Be skilled in planning and leading programs.	
Have a strong commitment and loyalty to the Lutheran Church.	
Understand and interpret the mission of the Church from a global perspective.	
Deal effectively with conflict.	
Bring joy and good humor to relationships.	
Be able to share leadership and work with a team.	
Be creative and innovative about his or her tasks.	
Be able to use technology and media.	
Appreciate cultural diversity in language and customs.	
Have talents in the areas of music, arts and writing.	

13. Mutual Expectations

Please list the five primary areas of activity or focus that you wish your newly-called rostered leader to give special attention to during the first year of his or her ministry at this congregation or organization:

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.
- E.



Please list the five ways that this congregation / organization will support and encourage the rostered leader during the first year in order to help her or him accomplish these responsibilities:

A.	
B.	
C.	
D.	
E.	

14. Compensation

PARSONAGE _____ SOCIAL SECURITY TAX OFF _____

MAXIMUM AMOUNT AVAILABLE FOR DEFINED COMPENSATION _____

15. Benefits

PENSION _____ MEDICAL _____ VACATION WEEKS _____

SABBATICAL POLICY _____ PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY _____

ARE BACKGROUND CHECK
REQUIRED _____

16. Professional Expenses

AUTO / TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT _____ PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES ACCOUNT _____

FIRST CALL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION _____ CONTINUING EDUCATION _____

Comments:

Please offer any comment or explanation regarding the compensation package, especially as it compares to synodical recommendations or guidelines.

17. Other Supporting Resources



Are you able to supply the following items, if requested

Mission and Vision statement of the congregation or organization

Printed history of the congregation or organization

Strategic Plan: Goals and Objectives

Budget

Annual Report

Position description: Duties and Responsibilities

Communications Piece (publicity, newsletter, etc.)

PART IV: COMMENTARY

You are encouraged to offer information or commentary that will help the reader appreciate the vision, opportunities, and challenges and nature of your ministry site. Use this opportunity to promote and commend your ministry possibilities.

PART V: COMPLETION OF PROFILE

19. Discernment Process and Adoption

Please describe the process used to gather information, solicit responses, and officially adopt this Ministry Site Profile. (Approximately 100 words maximum).

Enter the date on which this Ministry Site profile was adopted by vote of the Congregation Council or organization's board:

20. Call Process Contact Person

NAME

TITLE

OFFICE PHONE

E-MAIL



[CLICK HERE TO ALLOW A CHANGE IN THE CALL PROCESS CONTACT PERSON'S INFORMATION](#)

21. Reference's Recommendation

NAME

E-MAIL

DAY PHONE

EVENING PHONE

CELL

FAX

SAMPLE

Candidates

As soon as the MSP is electronically submitted through the ELCA portal, the assistant to the bishop will automatically be notified. He/she will then begin a churchwide search for candidates, which may arise from three sources.

1. **People in the congregation may nominate candidates.** (A form for such nominations is at the end of this section.) Such nominations must be approved by the Call Committee and then forwarded to the bishop’s office. The assistant to the bishop will then contact the pastor/leader’s bishop to see if it is alright to contact them. If so, the nominee will be contacted to see if they are interested. If they are interested, they must get a RMP filled out to determine if they are a good match.
2. **Pastors/leaders may express an interest.** Once again, the assistant to the bishop will see if they are a good match.
3. **Database.** Most of the candidates will come from the churchwide database of all rostered leaders that are presently seeking a call and have submitted an RMP.

The goal of the office of the bishop is to provide 3-5 well matched candidates to the call committee for each round of interviews.

Special Circumstances

Some pastoral candidates need to be considered in a special way due to their circumstances. Among these are:

FIRST CALL CANDIDATES: When candidates are new graduates from one of our seminaries, they may be recommended either individually or in pairs (not usually more than two at a time). The reason for this is that a seminarian does not have a call and therefore a “place to remain working.” We try not to recommend a seminarian with “experienced” candidates. That is usually a mixing of “apples and oranges,” since one has experience and other does not.

CLERGY COUPLES: There is also a special condition involved when a clergy couple is being considered. Most often, only that couple will be presented as candidates rather than with other candidates, as well. This, once again, will be handled on a case by case basis.

MULTI-STAFF SITUATIONS: When congregations are filling positions where there is multiple staff, it is vital that a clear job description be developed for each person on the staff. It is important that each partner in a team ministry situation know what they are being called to do before the call is extended. It is recommended that all current staff be included at some point during the course of the interview process in order to give both the final candidate and staff opportunity to meet one another.

While awaiting candidate names

Upon receiving the RMPs for 3-5 candidates, the call committee will need to do initial phone/Skype interviews with all the candidates and will probably bring in several for on site interviews. While waiting for these names, the committee should be preparing the content and format for both the initial and on site interviews, and doing mock interviews.

When candidate names are received

The slate of 3 to 5 candidate RMPs will probably be sent to the committee chair by email in PDF format. It is the responsibility of the chairperson to make hard copies of the RMPs for each committee member. Do not forward electronic copies of RMPs!

When names are received, the candidates should immediately be contacted and informed of a timeline for the interview process. This can be done by email. Later, they can be contacted to set up times for initial interviews.

Prior to the initial phone/Skype interview, it is best to contact all of the references listed on each candidate’s RMP. The committee may want to divide up the candidates and use an agreed upon set of questions. The same people should also do web research: search the candidate’s name, visit their congregation’s website and Facebook site, read articles they have written, listen to recorded material, and so forth. All this will help shape each initial interview.

Initial phone/virtual interviews

- Each candidate is to be given the courtesy of an initial interview. How people look on paper and what they are in reality may be two different things.
- Interviews should be done in as short a period as possible; perhaps 2 or 3 sessions.
- 30 - 60 minutes in length. Process each interview the same day.
- You will need to develop initial interview questions that will accomplish two things: 1) help you get to know the candidate; 2) help you discern whom to release and whom to bring in for on site interviews.
- Remember that you are also being interviewed. Allow time for the candidate to ask questions.
- Most committees are now doing their initial interviews virtually (via some web application). Here are some good protocols:
 1. Get his/her contact information for the desired application and, just as a precaution, consider giving him or her yours.
 2. A day or two before the meeting to make sure you have the latest version.
 3. Just in case, have phone numbers handy.
 4. Turn off all other programs. Often you’ll see what is called an A/V synch problem; that is where you see someone talking but the sound doesn’t match. This can result

when you are running more programs. Video and audio require a lot of resources. For best results it is good to re-start your computer and after your re-start have ONLY Skype running.

5. Connection. Use an Ethernet - wired - connection rather than Wi-Fi. [Check your speed](#) for your upload and download speeds. You need at least 512 Kbps down and 512 Kbps up as a bare minimum. The most important number is the upload speed. If you don't have enough upload speed there will be significant problems.
6. Have those in your environment keep quiet. If you're in a very noisy environment, try to mitigate the noise as much as possible. Avoid all “side” conversations.
7. Keep phones on silent or turned off.
8. Lighting is important when using in video. Have a comfortable, warm lighting facing the person in front of the camera. Avoid bright lights behind people.
9. If it is possible, using an external microphone you will give a better result. The better the sound quality the better the experience for all involved.

It is wise to do a mock interview to make certain that your equipment is working well and that your interview is appropriately structured. This can be done with the same person that comes in for your mock on site interview. Process the interview with the committee and the interviewee.

Your Interim Pastor or the synod office will find an appropriate person for your mock interviews. After the face to face interview, they should be paid an honorarium of \$250 plus mileage. This is based on our synod's pulpit supply guidelines for two Sunday morning services. (Do not fail to do mock interviews. This will be money very well spent in preparation.)

Releasing names

As the Call Committee decides to release names from further consideration, they should immediately notify those being released. This can be done by email; the Assistant to the Bishop (blair@gulfcoastsynod.org) should be carbon copied - cc.

Please be gracious - but honest - in releasing names. No one likes to “not make the cut.” (Sometimes a candidate may decide to withdraw after an initial or on site interview. Again, you are also being interviewed.) It is helpful to candidates being released to know why the committee thought that he/she was not a strong match. (It is also helpful for the committee itself to think this through.)

As names are released, the committee chair will collect and destroy all hard copy RMPs for those candidates.



Going forward with names

It is best if people are told by phone that you would like to move forward with an on site interview. Potential times for the visit can also be discussed. This should be followed up by a summary email; carbon copying the assistant to the bishop.

On site interviews

First, some general protocols for onsite interviews:

- The congregation pays all costs.
- The candidate’s spouse or same gendered partner should always be invited. They should not sit in on the actual interview; they can do other things during that time.
- Use the same format/schedule for each interview, insofar as possible. See example in the box below.
- Get him/her/them a nice hotel room. Do not have them stay with a congregant.
- Rent them a car so that he/she/they can do some exploring on their own.
- Be mindful of where/when the interview is held and when site tours are done. Who else might be around?
- As before, have the site interviews in as brief a time span as possible; although this may be more difficult that with initial phone/virtual interviews.
- All committee members should be at all on site interviews.

A Frequently Used Model for On Site Interviews

- The candidate (and spouse/partner) arrive the afternoon of the interview.
- A few members of the call committee pick them up and bring them to their hotel.
- If a car has been rented, they can go to the hotel and get settled.
- Later in the afternoon, they can be taken on a tour of the community by several committee members.
- They can then have dinner with the entire Call Committee, or if preferred, several other committee members.
- The entire call committee meets with them for the formal interview in the evening. This may include a tour of the facilities.
- The next morning they can have breakfast with a few other committee members.
- They are then free to explore on their own before heading home or to the airport.

The times - at meals and on tour - when a few committee members are with the candidate and spouse/partner are important. We sometimes get a better sense of people when we are in casual social settings than we do in formal interviews.

The formal on site interview

Make certain the room for the interview is comfortable and well arranged. Can everyone see everyone? Can everyone hear everyone? Is the temperature OK? Is bottled water available? Is the setting private and confidential? You want people to be able to focus on the interview and not on distractions or discomforts.

The interview should last no more than two hours. This means that, while there needs to be room for digression and follow up questions, someone on the committee (the chairperson?) needs to assume responsibility for moving the conversation forward. Remember: the candidate will also have questions and comments. And, the committee will also want to share “initial reactions” with each other and process the interview as soon as it is over. Anything more than 2 hours can make for a long night!

It is also a best practice if particular people on the committee have particular questions to ask related to particular areas that need to be covered. In this way the interviews are consistent and you can compare “apples to apples.”

Forming interview questions

A variety of topics will need to be covered, from personal to professional. However, particular attention should be paid to getting at items 11, 12, and 13 on the MSP. Amid all of the “general tasks” that are involved in ministry, these are the particular ministry tasks you are asking your new pastor/leader to focus on.

In shaping questions, keep these things in mind:

- How will you know when you hear a good answer? What are you looking for? It is important to know exactly what you meant by items 11-13.
- Ask questions that deal with behavior. (Some on the committee may be familiar with a “behavioral interview.”) Thoughts and opinions are important, but more important is how a candidate will do with his/her thought and opinions. And the best indicators of what he/she will do are his/her past actions and accomplishments.

Some examples of areas/issues in ministry that might be addressed:

Worship/Preaching

1. How have you gone about preparing worship services?
2. Tell us about the most difficult sermon you ever preached?
3. How have you shaped worship in previous settings?

Social Ministry/Outreach

1. How have you assessed community needs and community strengths?

2. In what ways you have contributed to the quality of life in your community?
3. How have you enabled members of your congregation to respond to community needs?

Administrator/Leader

1. Describe a time when you had to help people to achieve consensus or cohesiveness.
2. What “team building” techniques have you used with staff?
3. Tell us about a period in your life when you had to manage multiple demands in your work and how you determined priorities.

Teaching the Faith

1. Tell us about any cross generational faith development that you have used.
2. Describe how you have helped adults to grow in their faith.
3. Describe your approach to growing children and young people in discipleship.

Evangelism

1. In what ways have your congregations become familiar with “those who are not here yet?”
2. What have you done in previous ministry sites to enable people to talk about their faith?
3. Describe how you have achieved a multicultural approach to congregational life.

Interpersonal Climate

1. How have you helped a congregation be a place of welcome?
2. Share a time when you needed to be a “non-anxious presence”.
3. Describe a time when conflict arose between you and another person and how reconciliation was achieved.

Ministry in Crisis/Counseling

1. Can you share a time when you dealt with a person in crisis?
2. Describe how you have used healthy boundaries to strengthen your ministry.
3. How do you assess your own professional limitations when ministering to persons in crisis?

Interpreter of Theology

1. Can you tell us of a time when you challenged people to “think like Lutherans?”
2. How have you helped a congregation be a Lutheran presence in the community?
3. What was the best continuing education event you attended in the last two years? Why was it so helpful?

Innovator

1. Tell us about a time when you introduced a new idea in a congregation.
2. Describe your current vision for ministry and how you have helped others capture that vision.

3. Think back in and describe a situation that was stagnate or failing and describe how you stepped in to revitalize it.

Denominational Leadership

1. Describe how you have guided a congregation into understanding its place in the greater church.
2. How have you participated in the work of the church beyond the congregation, including ecumenical relationships, church agencies, and institutions?
3. Describe what your congregation believes to be its role in the ELCA.

Stewardship

1. Describe how you have helped others grow in their personal stewardship.
2. How “green” is your present/former congregation?
3. How have you enabled/challenged councils to lead a congregation in stewardship?

Personal Growth

1. Describe some of your most important accomplishments and how you went about reaching those goals.
2. What do you think are your “growing edges?”
3. Briefly describe ways in which you care for yourself physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually.

Your Call to Ministry

1. Who was the most influential person in your becoming a pastor/rostered minister? Why?
2. How has your sense of a call to ministry changed over the years?
3. What is your role in a congregation as a pastor/rostered leader?

After on site interviews

The call committee will need to decide if they have a candidate who they want to place before the congregation to be called as a pastor or other rostered leader. If so, they should present, in person, that candidate’s name to the congregational council, along with their reasons for believing that this is the person God is calling to be a leader for the congregation. **Even if consensus about the finalist wasn’t reached by the Call Committee, they must speak in solidarity with complete unanimity and support when the name is brought forward.**

If the call committee does not find a suitable candidate in the first slate of names, they should release all the candidates and contact the assistant to the bishop for a second slate of candidates. Call committees should not “settle.” (At the same time, everyone must realize that there are not perfect candidates, just as there are no perfect congregations!)

Pastoral Candidate Nomination Form

Nominee's Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Nominee's Current Congregation: _____

City: _____ State: _____

1. How do you see this pastor's gifts, leadership skill, and abilities helpful to furthering your congregation's mission and ministry?

2. How do you know this pastor?

3. Why do you think this pastor might consider this congregation for his/her next call?

4. Other comments:

Person making this nomination: _____

Phone #: _____ Email: _____

Negotiation

After the Call Committee presents its chosen final candidate to the congregational council, the council's responsibility is to negotiate the final compensation package. The council has already provided the "maximum defined compensation" figure that was used on the MSP. However, sometimes the defined compensation claimed to be needed by a candidate may be a bit higher, and sometimes it can be significantly lower. It is usually best if this negotiation is handled by the Executive Committee. A copy of our [Synod Compensation Guidelines](#) is at the end of this section.

Copies of the "Compensation, Benefits, and Responsibilities" forms - which must accompany the Letter of Call - are also at the end of this section. Writeable PDFs can be downloaded from the ELCA website: [Pastor](#). Writeable PDF Letters of Call are available on the synod website.

2. Continuing education time of _____ weeks per year
(recommended minimum of two weeks per year that may be accumulated up to three years, as reflected in a continuing education agreement developed by the pastor and congregation council).

3. Participation in a First-Call Theological Education Program, where applicable;

4. Ongoing care through a Mutual Ministry Committee;

5. Up to two months of continued salary, housing, and contributions to the ELCA Parsonage Benefit and Other Benefits Program in a 24-month period in the event that the pastor is physically or mentally disabled¹; and

6. Where applicable, parental leave up to six weeks with full salary, housing, and benefits.

¹Provision may be made for further unpaid time for disability recovery as agreed by the congregation, but with the stipulation that unused accumulated sick leave will not be compensated at the end of this call.

A description of the particular responsibilities of this position may be attached to this "Definition of Compensation, Benefits, and Responsibilities."

OR THE FOLLOWING MAY BE COMPLETED

E. OTHER PROVISIONS
Special emphasis of the pastor and special encouragement by the congregation:

1. During this time period, the pastor will give special attention in ministry to the following:

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

2. The congregation will encourage this pastor's ministry in the following ways:

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

F. OTHER MATTERS
(Such as accountabilities, service on synodical or churchwide boards and committees, work in church-camp programs, other such details) _____

We, the undersigned, certify that the necessary approvals of the congregation and congregation council have been granted for the provisions set forth above.

Date Congregation President

Date Council Secretary

I certify that I accept the above statement:
The Reverend _____ Date of signature _____

Note: Retain originals in records of the congregation. Make a copy for the pastor. As a matter of information, send a copy to the synodical office. A description of the particular responsibilities of this position may be attached to this "Definition of Compensation, Benefits, and Responsibilities."
Revised October 2013

A section of the compensation, benefits, and responsibilities that is as important as all the monetary figures is found on page two. The section highlighted in yellow needs to be given careful consideration during negotiations.

Section E.1.a-e ought to clearly define the areas on which the pastor/rostered minister is to give special attention during his/her first year. Section E.2.a-e ought to clearly define what the congregation will do to support the pastor/lay rostered minister in those specific areas.

All ministry is mutual. The rostered ministers and congregational members both have a role. There are lots of opinions and expectations about "what the new pastor/minister should do when he/she gets here." This form can help bring clarity amidst the cacophony

of voices. It also provides a good basis for a ministry review at year's end.

Setting this meeting date is also the responsibility of the congregational council. Consult your congregation's constitution about calling a special congregational meeting. These negotiations need to be finalized before the congregational meeting to vote on issuing a call to the pastor/rostered lay minister. A good time to do this is when the finalist is brought back for a meet and greet.

The meet and greet

Most people want to meet the candidate and - if there be one - his/her family. This can be done at any time during the week. In fact, it is usually easier for the candidate to get away during the week than on a weekend. One day will usually suffice. During the afternoon, perhaps the candidate can visit with the church staff, preschool, or others. A congregational meal or reception can be held in the evening. The candidate can introduce him/herself and his/her family, do a devotional of some kind, and then have some general Q&A time. (A "trial sermon" is discouraged as it puts too much weight on one aspect of ministry. Also, most candidates will already have sermons online, and these are a much better indicator of regular preaching and liturgical practice.)

Information about the candidate can also be disseminated to the congregation. Ask the candidate if you can put such information online as his/her present congregation may not be aware that he/she is being considered for a call.

The congregational meeting to issue a call

Usually a special congregational meeting is called to issue a letter of call. The only business that can be conducted at a special congregational meeting is the business for which the meeting is called. The motion to issue a call is brought by a member of the Call Committee. Since the motion comes from a committee member, it does not require a second.

The motion can be very simple, *"The Call Committee of Some Lutheran Church moves to Call Someone as Pastor/Associate Pastor/ Deacon/etc."* There may be discussion of the motion. The motion may not be amended; neither can the compensation package be amended. When discussion ends, a paper ballot is used. The vote is either a "YES" or a "NO." After the ballots are counted, the vote is announced. A 2/3 majority is required for the motion to pass. A motion to destroy the ballots may be entertained; otherwise, the ballots must be kept with the minutes of the meeting.

Immediately following the meeting, the Council President should call the candidate elect and inform him/her of the decision. The Letter of Call and supporting documents are then signed by the appropriate council members and forwarded to the bishop's office to be attested. The bishop will then send them to the candidate elect for his/her acceptance and signature.

Constitutionally a candidate elect has 30 days to accept or return the call. However, candidates are told that, if they let their name go before a congregation for a call vote, they must first: 1) withdraw from any other call processes in which that they are involved; 2) be 99% sure that they will accept the call if it is offered. Like the congregation, candidates also need to be in discernment during the process. He/she need not wait until a Letter of Call in his/her hand!

DEFINITION OF COMPENSATION, BENEFITS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PASTOR

First Line Prepared by _____ (Name and address of congregation)
Second Line For the Reverend _____ (Name of pastor)
Third Line For the period _____ (Duration-normally for one year, with annual review)

A. COMPENSATION

- Line A.1. List base cash salary.
- Line A.2. List dollar amount of housing allowance beyond base salary. Designation of the percentage and amount of salary devoted to housing allowance must be done in an annual resolution of the congregation council's minutes. The individual pastor is finally responsible for any tax implications of the housing allowance.
- Line A.3. List dollar amount of any payment allowance (if provided) for "Self-employed Social Security."
- Line A.4. If a parsonage or other housing is provided, consider costs of a utilities allowance (if provided) or other allowances (if any).

B. PENSION AND OTHER BENEFITS

The pension and benefits program of the ELCA was established to provide the pastor with retirement, disability, survivor, and medical-dental coverage.

- Line B.1. Indicate the percentage of contribution on the basis of the defined compensation of the pastor (salary and housing). The percentage is based on current requirements of the plan and the policy of the synod for Letters of Call.
- Line B.2. Sponsorship will include medical-dental coverage (where applicable) for the pastor's spouse and children, unless they have other employer-provided group medical insurance, the pastor consents to waiving medical-dental coverage under the ELCA Portico Benefit Services.
- Line B.3. Select level of health coverage.
- Line B.4. List amounts of *other* insurance or benefits, if any, to be provided to the pastor, *beyond* those that are part of the pension and benefits contributions made by the congregation for the coverages provided under the ELCA Portico Benefit Services (retirement, disability, survivor, and medical-dental coverage).

C. EXPENSES

Expenses are NOT part of the pastor's compensation. Rather, these items represent payment of costs related to the carrying out of this ministry.

- Line C.1. Automobile expenses may be covered by a specified total amount or on an

actual recorded mileage basis.

Other travel allowance provisions would be noted here as well.

Line C.2. Indicate amount (if any) to be provided for other professional expenses, such as an allowance for theological books and periodicals.

Line C. 3. Coverage of expenses for official meetings of the synod is required.

Line C.4. Indicate amount provided for continuing education.

Line C.5. List other items and amounts to be provided for them.

Line C.6. For pastor accepting a call, define arrangements and reimbursements for moving expenses. Moving expenses normally are paid in full by the calling congregation.

D. AGREEMENT

Line D.1. Enter vacation time. Normally four weeks per year encompassing four Sundays is provided.

Line D.2. Enter time for continuing education. Minimum recommendation is indicated on the form.

Line D.3. Provision must be made for the "First Call Theological Education Program" for recent seminary graduates.

Line D.4. This provides a reminder of the congregation's commitment to the care exercised by the Mutual Ministry Committee (C13.04, in the Constitution for Congregations).

Line D.5. Disability leave provisions are coordinated with the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program and with Social Security.

a. Up to two months of continued salary, housing, and contributions to the pension program in a 12-month period are to be provided by the congregation.

b. Provision may be made for further unpaid time for disability recovery as agreed by the congregation, but with the stipulation that unused accumulated sick leave will not be compensated at the end of the call.

Line D.6. Where applicable, parental leave is noted.

E. OTHER PROVISIONS

A description of the particular responsibilities of the position may be attached or a list may be included here indicating the areas to which the pastor will give special attention and the ways in which the congregation will offer encouragement.

F. OTHER MATTERS

Additional detail may be insert here related to the broader responsibilities that a pastor may carry in the life of the church.

SIGNATURES

Normally, the president or vice president of the congregation signs and dates the document. When accepting the agreement, the pastor signs and dates the document.

**DEFINITION OF COMPENSATION, BENEFITS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES
FOR MINISTERS OF WORD AND SERVICE UNDER CALL**

Prepared by _____

for _____

for the period _____ to _____

A. COMPENSATION

The congregation will provide the following annual compensation: \$ _____

B. PENSION AND OTHER BENEFITS

The congregation will sponsor the rostered minister in the Pension and Other Benefits Program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which provides retirement, disability, survivor and medical-dental coverage.

(Sponsorship will include medical-dental coverage for the individual's spouse and children unless they have other employer-provided group medical insurance coverage and the individual consents to waiving medical-dental coverage for them under the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.)

1. ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program:

a. ELCA pension at _____% of defined compensation: \$ _____

2. ELCA medical-and-dental insurance (*check one below*):

a. Member only c. Member and children e. Coverage waived

b. Member and spouse d. Member, spouse, and children

3. Other insurance or benefits: _____ \$ _____
_____ \$ _____

C. EXPENSES

The congregation will provide for the following expenses related to this position:

1. Automobile and travel allowance \$ _____

2. Other professional expenses \$ _____

3. Expenses for official meetings of the synod

4. Continuing education (\$1,000 recommended; minimum \$700 from calling source) \$ _____

5. Other (_____) \$ _____

6. Pay the moving expenses to this field of service as follows: _____

D. AGREEMENT

1. Vacation time of _____ days per year, including _____ Sundays;
2. Continuing education time of _____ weeks per year (recommended minimum of two weeks per year that may be accumulated up to three years) as reflected in a continuing-education agreement developed by the rostered minister and congregation council;
3. Participation in a First-Call Theological Education Program, where applicable;
4. Ongoing care through a Mutual Ministry Committee;
5. Up to two months of continued salary and contributions to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program in a 12-month period in the event that the rostered minister is physically or mentally disabled*; and
6. Maternity/Paternity or Adoptive leave of _____ weeks with full salary, housing, and benefits. (Recommended 6 weeks; 4 weeks minimum).

* Provision may be made for further unpaid time for disability recovery as agreed by the congregation, but with the stipulation that unused accumulated sick leave will not be compensated at the end of this call.

E. OTHER PROVISIONS

Special emphases of the minister of Word and Service under call and special encouragement by the congregation:

1. During this time period, the rostered minister under call will give special attention to the following:
 - (a) _____
 - (b) _____
 - (c) _____
 - (d) _____
 - (e) _____

2. The congregation will encourage and support this rostered minister in the following ways:
 - (a) _____
 - (b) _____
 - (c) _____
 - (d) _____
 - (e) _____

F. OTHER MATTERS

(Such as accountabilities, service on synod or churchwide boards and committees, work in outdoor ministry programs, or other such details.)

We, the undersigned, certify that the necessary approvals of the congregation and Congregation Council have been granted for the provisions set forth above.

Rostered Minister

Congregation President

Date

Date

NOTE: Retain original in records of the congregations. Make a copy for the person under call. As a matter of information, send a copy to the synod office. A description of the particular responsibilities of this position may be attached to this "Definition of Compensation, Benefits, and Responsibilities."

(Revised February 2017)

2019 Compensation Guidelines for the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod



1. Foreword

“Within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America rostered ministers may serve as pastors or deacons. The process of calling rostered ministers within the life of the church is therefore primarily about discerning God’s will for and God’s call upon the congregation or ministry in which they will serve. *Prayerfully, the church calls forth those they believe God can best use to help them carry out their mission together.*

Rostered leadership is not a self-called vocation but a unique calling from God through the church to serve and equip the whole people of God. This is so that the church can live together faithfully as the body of Christ, equip the baptized for their work, and fulfill its purpose to proclaim and embody the redemptive intentions of God in the world.”

“A Theology of Call” - ELCA Website

A “calling” implies a *mutuality* between those rostered people being called and the agency or congregation issuing the call. This mutuality means that congregations and other ministry sites are to live for the well-being of the rostered ministers that they call, and rostered ministers are to live for the well-being of the communities into which they are called, so that together – with the whole church – they might live in Christ for the life of the world. **“We do not live to ourselves...” (Romans 14:7)**

The Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod embraces Biblical values with regard to the relationship between rostered ministry and congregational life and mission:

- The church is the body of Christ; called to live out the implications of the gospel for the sake of the world. As members of the body of Christ, all members of a congregation provide ministry in the name of Christ. ***Rostered ministers that equip the church for the work of mutual ministry are valued. (Ephesians 4:11ff)***
- In the Lutheran tradition, in order that the church may be equipped for ministry, high worth is placed on equipping rostered ministry. ***The personal, ethical, and educational standards required of leaders are valued. (1st Timothy 3:1ff)***
- Congregations are to be centers of "word and sacrament" as well as caring compassionate communities that are evangelical in seeking and welcoming the "homeless" and the "stranger." ***Rostered ministers that equip the church to be so Christ centered that it is outwardly focused are valued. (Matthew 25:31ff)***
- Congregations are to continually seek out Christ’s calling to mutual ministry in their context. ***Rostered ministers that inspire an ongoing mutual discernment for ministry are valued. (Romans 12:1-3)***



Compensation for Rostered Ministers should involve...

Years of Rostered Experience

There are acquired skills, wisdom, and experiences that can only come from actual rostered service.

Years of Non-Rostered Experience

Second career people bring to rostered service life experiences and skills from other fields that are helpful to mutual ministry.

Worship Attendance

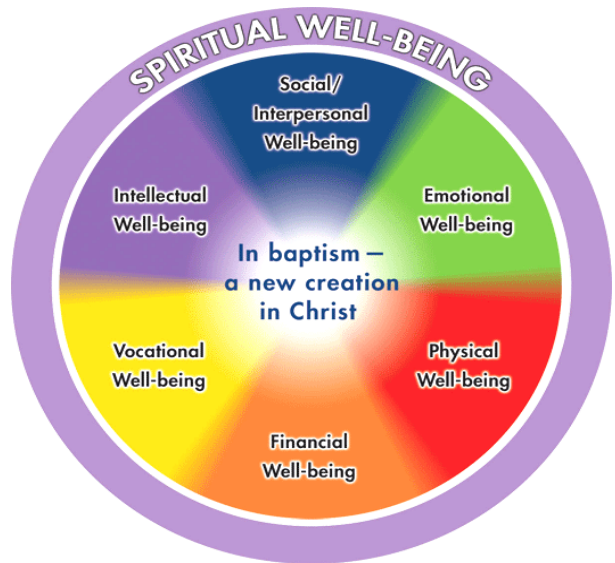
The larger the weekly worshipping Community, the more complex The system rostered ministers must administer.

Advanced Training and Education

Leaders that actively equip themselves for ministry are better able and more likely to create a spirit of life long learning in a congregation.

Local Salaries and Cost of Living

Fair compensation should reflect the realities of the congregation and community to which a leader is called.



All people - rostered ministers included - are complex creatures. We are all, in the words of the Psalmist, “fearfully and wonderfully made.” Our well-being and our being made well include:

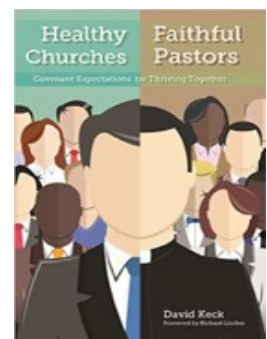
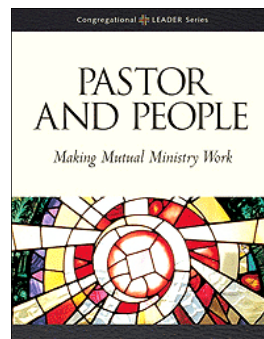
- ✓ Intellectual Well-being
- ✓ Social/Interpersonal Well-being
- ✓ Emotional Well-being
- ✓ Physical Well-being
- ✓ Financial Well-being
- ✓ Vocational Well-being

All of these are tied to our spiritual well-being. None of them can be separated out from the others. Compensation, goals, evaluations, work climate, continuing education, rest, and the like are vital to the well-being of leaders. For better or worse, the well-being of our leaders has a direct impact on the ministry sites they serve.

Mutual Ministry

The mutual ministry inherent in a call requires both *mutual* responsibility and accountability. People often call synod offices and ask, “Do you have anything we can use to evaluate our pastor?” There are usually some questions in response to this query: “Have you set any mutually defined goals or objectives?” “Are you evaluating the ministry, or just the minister?”

Two resources are suggested for congregational councils. The book, [Pastor and People](#), provides tools for beginning a mutual ministry committee and a personnel committee. Additionally, it includes planning and evaluation procedures for making mutual ministry work. The book, [Healthy Churches, Faithful Pastors](#), gives the perspective of what it is like to be a pastor and compares it to what healthy congregations expect from their pastors. Discussion guides and questions are provided for leaders to study these perspectives with their pastor. This resource is especially recommended at the time when a congregation is in transition or when a rostered minister is new to a call.



2. Ordained Rostered Ministers (Pastors)

The compensation recommendations attempt to address three primary concerns:



1. To clarify language used about pastoral salaries.
2. To use school district compensation models as the best reflector of community values.
3. To reflect the difference in the cost of living between rural/smaller town and urban/suburban areas.

Urban/Suburban Salary Grid

Years Exper.	Base Salary & Housing	Social Security Offset	Defined Compensation	Base Salary w/ Parsonage	Parsonage Base & SS Offset*
0	65,036	5,388	70,424	49,297	54,684
1	65,486	5,425	70,911	49,638	55,062
2	65,936	5,462	71,398	49,979	55,441
3	66,386	5,499	71,885	50,320	55,819
4	66,836	5,537	72,373	50,661	56,198
5	67,286	5,574	72,860	51,002	56,576
6	67,736	5,611	73,347	51,343	56,954
7	68,186	5,649	73,835	51,684	57,333
8	68,636	5,686	74,322	52,025	57,711
9	69,086	5,723	74,809	52,366	58,089
10	69,536	5,760	75,296	52,707	58,468
11	69,986	5,798	75,784	53,049	58,846
12	70,436	5,835	76,271	53,390	59,225
13	70,886	5,872	76,758	53,731	59,603
14	71,336	5,909	77,245	54,072	59,981
15	71,786	5,947	77,733	54,413	60,360
16	72,236	5,984	78,220	54,754	60,738
17	72,686	6,021	78,707	55,095	61,116
18	73,136	6,059	79,195	55,436	61,495
19	73,586	6,096	79,682	55,777	61,873
20	74,036	6,133	80,169	56,118	62,252
21	74,486	6,170	80,656	56,459	62,630
22	74,936	6,208	81,144	56,801	63,008
23	75,386	6,245	81,631	57,142	63,387
24	75,836	6,282	82,118	57,483	63,765
25	76,286	6,320	82,606	57,824	64,143
26	76,736	6,357	83,093	58,165	64,522
27	77,186	6,394	83,580	58,506	64,900
28	77,636	6,431	84,067	58,847	65,279
29	78,086	6,469	84,555	59,188	65,657
30	78,536	6,506	85,042	59,529	66,035

* Pastors living in a parsonage must pay Social Security based on value of housing plus base salary

Rural/Small Town Salary Grid

Years of Exper.	Base Salary & Housing	Social Security Offset	Defined Compensation	Base Salary w/ Parsonage	Parsonage Base & SS Offset*
0	59,711	4,946	64,657	45,260	50,207
1	60,161	4,984	65,145	45,601	50,585
2	60,611	5,021	65,632	45,942	50,963
3	61,061	5,058	66,119	46,284	51,342
4	61,511	5,096	66,607	46,625	51,720
5	61,961	5,133	67,094	46,966	52,099
6	62,411	5,170	67,581	47,307	52,477
7	62,861	5,207	68,068	47,648	52,855
8	63,311	5,245	68,556	47,989	53,234
9	63,761	5,282	69,043	48,330	53,612
10	64,211	5,319	69,530	48,671	53,990
11	64,661	5,357	70,018	49,012	54,369
12	65,111	5,394	70,505	49,353	54,747
13	65,561	5,431	70,992	49,694	55,126
14	66,011	5,468	71,479	50,036	55,504
15	66,461	5,506	71,967	50,377	55,882
16	66,911	5,543	72,454	50,718	56,261
17	67,361	5,580	72,941	51,059	56,639
18	67,811	5,617	73,428	51,400	57,017
19	68,261	5,655	73,916	51,741	57,396
20	68,711	5,692	74,403	52,082	57,774
21	69,161	5,729	74,890	52,423	58,153
22	69,611	5,767	75,378	52,764	58,531
23	70,061	5,804	75,865	53,105	58,909
24	70,511	5,841	76,352	53,446	59,288
25	70,961	5,878	76,839	53,788	59,666
26	71,411	5,916	77,327	54,129	60,044
27	71,861	5,953	77,814	54,470	60,423
28	72,311	5,990	78,301	54,811	60,801
29	72,761	6,028	78,789	55,152	61,179
30	73,211	6,065	79,276	55,493	61,558

* Pastors living in a parsonage must pay Social Security based on value of housing plus base salary

Language

For the sake of clarity, “salary” refers to the sum of “base salary,” housing allowance, and social security offset. The total of these three are what Portico Benefit Services terms “defined compensation” on which the congregation pays retirement/health benefits and the rostered person pays taxes. The “salary” does not include retirement/health benefits, continuing education, or travel/auto reimbursement, all of which are organizational administrative costs.

Compensation Guidelines Using School District Compensation Models

1. Cost of living and compensation standards vary widely across the Gulf Coast Synod. In an effort to contextualize compensation recommendations, the local school teacher's salary schedule is used as a benchmark that reflects compensation in a particular community.
2. The educational requirement for a teacher is a bachelor's degree, while for a pastor it is a bachelor's degree and a four-year master's. Of the school districts researched, a teacher with a master's degree earned an additional \$1,000 - \$2,000; therefore, \$2,000 has been added to the base teacher's salary.
3. Because nearly all school districts offer contracts based on a 187-day school year, we have annualized the recommended base salary for clergy.
4. Compensation for school teachers was researched for school districts in both Texas and Louisiana, representative of the synod. Salary schedules were averaged in two categories: rural/smaller town and urban/suburban. The compensation grids represent an average of nineteen (19) rural/small town school districts and fourteen (14) urban/suburban communities.
5. For Social Security purposes the Internal Revenue Service always considers an ordained minister "*self-employed*." That means the congregation does not and **cannot pay FICA** [7.65%]. It also means that the minister **must pay self-employment SECA** [15.3%]. It is recommended that the congregation provide the minister with an 8.284% allowance in lieu of paying Social Security. 8.284% is used rather than 7.65% because the allowance is considered *taxable* income. The minister uses this money to pay a portion of the 15.3% self-employment tax. Salary, housing (allowance *or* parsonage value) and this Social Security allowance are used in determining SECA tax.
6. A note regarding clergy living in a parsonage (or church-provided housing): In the case of a parsonage, the fair housing value of the parsonage is part of the salary. For its purposes, Portico establishes it as 30% of the cash salary. Thus, when a parsonage is provided, the cash compensation paid to the pastor is reduced by 30% of the total (See light blue sections of grids).
7. The average experience adjustment for school teachers is \$450 per year, which has been factored into the compensation grid. Thus, a pastor with 10 years' experience should be compensated an additional \$4,500 annually. School districts vary in the number of steps awarded to experienced teachers. Some top out at 20 years, others as much as 35. For a second-career pastor, consideration should be given to prior work experience that will enhance a pastor's ministry.
8. The salaries in the compensation grids are generally considered to include housing allowance. However, since it is important for a pastor to live in the community that a congregation serves, for congregations in areas of high housing costs the "housing allowance" portion of the salary may be adjusted upward accordingly.

[Please see pages 3 and 4 for salary grids.]

HOUSING ALLOWANCE*

The housing component of compensation is a complicated matter because of variations in the cost of housing, IRS rules, and some congregations owning a parsonage while most do not. For an ordained minister the cost of housing is *compensation exempt of income tax* according to IRS rules. Deacons and other lay employees do not qualify for this tax benefit.

For the minister *in a parsonage*, utilities, repairs, insurance, lawn, maintenance, and remodeling are paid by the congregation, done in a timely manner and, of course, not taxed. The congregation can designate additional “furnishings allowance” for non-taxable income to be used for housing expenses by the minister. Some congregations with a parsonage also give an “equity allowance” so the pastor can build a modest housing equity for a future down payment on a house for retirement. Five percent (5%) of cash salary per year is suggested.

For the ordained minister who *owns or rents a home*, the limit of tax exemption is based on actual *housing expenses* recorded for the year by the minister – up to a maximum of the amount that was designated as “housing allowance” by the congregation council. The minister tracks and claims all justifiable expenses and then pays tax on the remaining “allowance” that is not actually used for housing.

Every December, the pastor should notify the congregation council that a specific amount of his/her compensation for the coming year be designated as housing allowance. The council acknowledges this request by a motion and vote that is entered into the meeting minutes. It needs to be understood that dividing housing allowance and salary is for income tax purposes, and the division can appear unusual. The council may choose to use this format within the minutes of its meeting:

A motion was duly made, seconded, and approved that the ministry compensation paid to Rev. _____ during the year 20__ include a designated housing allowance in the amount of \$ _____. This amount shall remain in effect annually until amended or rescinded.
(Source: Clergy Financial Services, Inc.)

(*The starting salaries include housing allowance. However, since it is important for a pastor to live in the community that a congregation serves, for congregations in areas of high housing costs the “housing allowance” portion of the salary may be adjusted upward accordingly.)

3. Deacons

The nature of a lay rostered minister’s work varies widely from congregation to congregation. Lay rostered ministers serve in calls ranging from Directors of Music to Directors of Operation and Finance. For this reason, there is not a single salary grid provided for lay rostered ministers. Instead, salary guidelines for lay rostered ministers are based on local and/or national salaries for the specific type of leader position. Contact the synod office for help in developing a compensation package for lay rostered ministers.



4. Health & Retirement Benefits for Rostered Ministers

Retirement and Medical Program

Full participation in the ELCA retirement and health benefit plans is expected for rostered ministers and their families. The retirement contribution is a minimum of 10% of Defined Compensation. The premium for the medical plan (medical and dental insurance, disability insurance, and death benefits) varies according to a schedule. Use the Portico rate calculator online.

In 2014, Portico entirely overhauled their health care plan to meet the changing shape of health care coverage in the United States. There are four (4) levels of coverage (i.e. Platinum+, Gold+, Silver+, and Bronze+) that correspond to the levels of health care available in the Affordable Health Care Plan. We recommend all rostered ministers be covered at the Gold+ level. After research and comparison of open market options, it has been determined that Portico's coverage is competitive and often less expensive than other providers. You can determine the cost of health care coverage as well as the cost of retirement contributions on the [Portico Website](#).

Sick Leave

The congregation should have a sick leave policy for all its rostered ministers and other personnel. The policy should include:

- The number of paid sick leave days available each year.
- Policies laying out procedures if more sick days are needed by an individual.

(Note: Sick leave days are important for modeling physical stewardship. For the sake of individuals and the community, people should be able to take the necessary time to heal. Conversely, "sick days" are for illness, healing, and recuperation. They are not "personal leave days;" neither should they be accrued. Congregations and personnel should model gracious and compassionate mutual trust and respect in creating, implementing, and using such policies.)

Disability Leave

Disability leave provisions are coordinated with Portico Benefit Services and with Social Security.

- Congregations are to provide up to two months of continued salary, housing, and contributions to the pension program in a 12-month period. (ELCA disability benefits begin with the third month of disability.)
- Provision may be made for further unpaid time for disability recovery as agreed by the congregation, but with the stipulation that unused accumulated sick leave will not be compensated at the end of the call.

Maternity Leave

Maternity leave is recommended with at least six weeks at full salary, housing, and benefits. Additional time may be negotiated by the rostered minister and the congregation because of special concerns or needs.

Paternity Leave

Paternity leave is recommended for new fathers; up to two consecutive weeks with full salary, housing, and benefits is suggested. Additional time may be negotiated by the rostered minister and the congregation because of special concerns or needs.

Adoptive Parent Leave

Adoptive parental leave should be provided immediately following the adoption. Two weeks, taken consecutively, is appropriate with full salary, housing, and benefits. Additional time may be negotiated by the rostered minister and the congregation because of special concerns or needs.

Vacation and Days Off

Because of the intense and emotional nature of the work done by a minister, it is important and recommended that the leader be granted four full weeks vacation (including Sundays) per year in order to tend to family responsibilities and emotional and spiritual refreshment. Vacation is not a reward, but recognition that a person needs time for renewal to be most effective in ministry. It is not necessary that vacation time be taken all at one time.

The congregation should also understand that the equivalent of two days off each week for family time and renewal is important. Of necessity, it is recognized that the minister is still “on call” during these days. The congregation needs to be trained not to encroach on days off except in an emergency.

Continuing Education

Continuing education is essential for rostered ministers and other staff to bring fresh insights and resources to the congregation and for professional growth. Continuing education is a means by which the rostered ministers build upon and extend knowledge, acquire new skills and grow into more effective ministry. Indeed, failure to maintain a regular discipline of continuing education should be regarded negatively in the annual performance and compensation review.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America expects its professional leaders to have a minimum of fifty (50) contact hours annually in continuing education. Congregations are asked to make available to their rostered persons at least two weeks per year for continuing education. The rostered person, in consultation with the mutual ministry committee and the congregation council, should determine the scheduling of continuing education. **The minimum recommended level for continuing education allowance is \$1,000 per year from the congregation and \$400 per year by the rostered person.**

If there is some special focus in mind, it is suggested rostered ministers may accrue unused continuing education time and monies, but only for a period of three years. This should be done only in consultation with the congregational council.

Other professional expenses such as books, subscriptions to magazines and journals, vestments, and media resources may be handled by establishing a set amount in the budget and paying the expenses as they occur. The annual professional leaders’ conference is an official meeting of the synod and should be paid by the congregation *but not from the continuing education allowance.*

All rostered ministers are required, by constitution, to attend the synod assembly and are expected by the bishop to attend leadership convocations and annual theological conference. *Neither rostered ministers nor congregations are to consider these times as “continuing education.”*

Sabbatical Study Leave

A sabbatical leave is recommended for rostered persons after the first seven years of service in a congregation/agency, and every five years thereafter in conjunction with congregational/agency mission planning. The recommended time for sabbatical leave is three months. For further information, contact the synod office for the document [*Policy and Guidelines for Sabbatical Leave for Rostered Persons*](#), Updated in August, 2015.

Professional Expenses

Rostered ministers receive reimbursement for professional expenses (including automobile use), but this is a matter of reimbursement, not compensation. Professional expenses therefore belong under “administrative” or “operating” expenses in the budget and not under “staff salaries.”

The IRS recommends that ministers be placed on an expense reimbursement plan in which business related expenses are paid to the rostered minister upon submission of an invoice or signed and itemized business expense form. This is in contrast to a system in which the minister is given a flat monthly allowance for expenses (which is reported as income) and then deducts business related expenses.

Automobile Expenses

As already indicated, use of the rostered minister's automobile for business activity is a congregational expense and should properly be listed under congregational administrative expenses in the budget rather than under compensation. Reimbursement to the rostered minister on a per-mile basis using an expense reimbursement plan is recommended. The IRS rate for business use of an automobile in 2018 is 54.5 cents per mile. Alternately, the congregation could consider providing the rostered minister with a church-owned or leased vehicle.

First Call Debt Retirement

Rostered ministers are increasingly graduating from seminary with significant undergraduate and graduate educational debts. First call congregations would do well to help with debt reduction. The amount should be 5% to 10% of the total educational debt.

Synod and Churchwide Ministry

Part of a rostered person's work is beyond the congregation in the synod and churchwide organization. The congregation council and the rostered ministers should agree upon the scope of this work.

Other

Congregations often adopt policies or procedures that are intended to benefit the rostered minister as they grow and "stay fresh" amid their duties and tasks. Such items might include:

- A policy about unused vacation time
- A policy to reimburse certain dues and memberships deemed essential to that ministry context
- A membership in a health or fitness club
- Participation in Portico's Flexible Spending Account
- Life insurance coverage
- Supplemental retirement or tax sheltered annuity contributions

5. Non-Rostered Employees

There are often people who are not rostered in the ELCA that are employed by congregations for ministry leadership. The work of our non-rostered ministers may include youth and family ministry, music, parish education, administration, maintenance, etc. These staff persons are employed either full or part time. The following compensation guidelines may be helpful for congregations to use when determining annual benefits. Please make appropriate and fair adjustments for part time staff.

For ALL non-rostered persons, the following guidelines are recommended:

- FICA paid by the congregation
- Vacation
 - 1-4 years of service: 2 weeks
 - 5-10 years of service: 3 weeks

- More than 15 years: 4 weeks
- Two days off each week
- Minimum annual continuing education allowance: \$1,000
- Theological Conference and Synod Assembly paid by the congregation
- Minimum annual professional expenses: \$500
- Workers' Compensation

Other Considerations

- **Cell Phone:** Many church staff persons, such as those in youth and family ministry, find that it is essential to have the use of a cell phone to do their work. Congregations and non-rostered staff should negotiate a monthly stipend for a cell phone for church related work.
- **Travel reimbursement:** Many church staff persons use their personal vehicle for church-related work. They should be reimbursed according to IRS current standards. An estimation of this annual expense should be in the congregation's annual budget.
- **Benefits:** It is fair and reasonable that congregations provide for non-rostered staff persons, who work more than 30 hours a week, with Portico Pension and Health Benefits. See the Portico website for special non-rostered rates.
- **Work Week:** Schedules and time commitments for persons who work with the church vary from week to week and season to season. Congregations should be sensitive to this rhythm. Congregations should encourage non-clergy persons to work an average of 40 hours a week. If more time is needed, comp time is appropriate when the schedule allows and is consistent with federal, state, and local laws governing overtime and comp time.

6. Severance

There are times when, for a variety of reasons, personnel are released from an organization; unfortunately, the same happens sometimes in congregations and other ministry sites. (An active Mutual Ministry Committee and the procedures outlined in [Pastor and People](#) can greatly lessen the chance of such severance resulting from conflict.)

1. In the case of rostered ministers, since they are under call from the congregation, the congregation's constitution must be followed. With regard to ordained rostered ministers, congregations should adhere closely to C9.05 of the Model Constitution for Congregations .
2. In the case of non-rostered ministers, the personnel committee and congregational council should exercise due diligence in trying to mediate any conflict, misunderstanding, or unmet expectations. The goal must always be to steward the ministry of the congregation while also being caring and compassionate.

In either case, if people are released from service to a congregation there should be as graceful and generous a severance as is possible and warranted; three to six months. Ministry leaders often function in highly specialized ways and it may take them some time to find another ministry site in which to serve. The Office of the Bishop can be helpful to congregations, rostered ministers, and other employees in these instances.

7. Afterword

- A “Mutual Ministry Committee” is encouraged several times in this document; along with many references to “mutuality.” As described in Pastor and People, a mutual ministry committee is NOT a support group or sounding board for the pastor. It is NOT a pastoral care committee. It IS a committee that, along with the pastor, continually discerns the ongoing mission of the congregation in its context and imagines how pastor and people might *together* best carry out that mission. Support/care groups for rostered ministers should be found outside of the congregation among colleagues and conferences.
- As indicated by the title of this document “2018 Compensation Guidelines,” these are guidelines, guiding principles. It is the *annual* responsibility of the congregational/ministry site leadership and rostered minister to mutually discuss and discern just and fair compensation in their specific context. The bishop will be reluctant to sign any first call under the minimum guidelines. If a congregation/ministry site cannot provide these amounts, they should meet with the bishop to arrive at a plan for reaching these basic compensation benchmarks.



Welcome and Installation

Moving

The pastor-elect and the officers of the Congregation Council should agree on arrangements for moving. The congregation is responsible for all moving expenses.

Tax Information

Effective January 1, 1994:

1. Mileage from old residence to new residence must be 50 or more miles.
2. Cost to move household goods and personal effects is deductible.
3. Cost of travel (including housing) from old residence is deductible.
4. All other items are no longer deductible.
5. Deduction is taken in arriving at adjusted gross income (Attach Form 3903 to Form 1040).

Reporting:

If you move in one calendar year and the costs reimbursed by the congregation, the amounts reimbursed for moving household goods/personal effects and travel to new residence need not be reported on W-2; likewise there is then no deduction. Reimbursement for any other items ought to be included in W-2.

Scheduling the Installation

The Congregation Council President and the pastor-elect need to confer to decide upon possible dates for an installation. These dates should be forwarded to the bishop's office. The local dean will be responsible to conduct the installation. Installation Service information is located at the end of this section.

If on a Sunday, it is best if the installation service can be held in the afternoon so that fellow clergy and other rostered people can attend.

Press Release & Publicity

A press release about the arrival of your new pastor is an opportunity for outreach. Try to get it in a part of the paper that real people actually read - NOT the “Religion Section.”

Things usually covered in a press release: a pastor's educational background, congregations served, major accomplishments, and sometimes information about the family. However, it's equally important to say something about the congregation and the congregation's ministry!

Look at all publicity from the perspective of the “people who are not here.” Think about those who are inactive. Are there unchurched people waiting for a congregation to show interest in them, rather than just itself? These folks are asking themselves, *“What difference does this make to me?” “How might I benefit?” “Why should I care?” “So, what?”*

People look for congregations offering a clear Biblical message, an interest in their needs, and a place that makes them feel wanted. Using the press release for outreach means that the image of the pastor and congregation portrayed in print must be what people experience in the church. Think of it as truth in advertising.

Also, think about how you might promote this event on your congregation’s website, Facebook, Twitter, Evite, and other media.

Finally, think of ways that you can make this a “community event” rather than just a “congregational event.” What clergy and religious leaders of other denominations/faiths can you invite and perhaps have participate in some way? What community and civic leaders might you have come and participate?

Does the congregation sponsor a Boy Scout or Girl Scout Troop? How might they be involved. Does the congregation have a pre-school or day school? How can they help you celebrate? The Installation Service is a great opportunity for a congregation to publically state that it is - and wants to be - a part of the community in which it exists!

“Carpe diem!”

Orders of Installation Services for All Rostered Leaders

The Service of Installation protocols and templates can also be found on [our website](#).



The Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod

Installation Guidelines

Welcome to the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod!

Please contact the Bishop and the Dean of your Conference to set a date for installation. Contact information for Deans and a complete list of congregations by Conference can be found at the following web site: <http://gulfcoastsynod.org/about-us/deans/>.

Welcome to the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod and congratulations on your new call! An installation is a galvanizing event as a new pastor takes a call in a congregation. It is also a festive, welcoming event that celebrates the end of the interim period, and a new chapter in a congregation's life.

When

An installation provides an opportunity for area pastors and other church leaders to welcome the new pastor, and show support. The congregation can feel the presence of a community of congregations working together. For this reason, installations are usually scheduled at a time other than Sunday morning. This also provides a time for the entire congregation to worship together if you typically have two or more services.

Who

Ordinarily the local Dean of your Conference presides at the service up to and including the installation. A list of area deans can be found at <http://gulfcoastsynod.org/about-us/deans/>. Occasionally, when the bishop is available the dean and bishop share leadership.

Who should be invited to the installation? Members of your congregation should be invited of course. The congregations in your Conference should be invited, along with any other local Lutheran congregations. Neighboring ministers of other denominations and community leaders (like the mayor) should be invited. Synod leaders may be invited. Friends and family of your new pastor should be sent an invitation. This is an

important occasion in the life of your congregation and in the life of the pastor and his/her family.

The invitation should encourage clergy to robe and process, telling them the color of stole to wear (the color is the color of the season in which the installation is being held), and when and where to meet to robe. Pews will need to be reserve for family and for vested clergy. Large congregations often create a diagram of where everyone is sitting and mark bulletins for key leaders in order to provide maximum hospitality to guests who will not be acquainted with your worship space. The invitation should also tell participants to whom or to what ministry the offering will be directed.

The liturgy

The service is a Eucharist (Communion Service) with the Installation after the Creed. The Installation Liturgy comes from the smaller Occasional Services of the LBW. It is strongly recommended that the entire service, including hymns be printed in the bulletin, so that guests have no trouble navigating the hymnal. Parts of the installation service have responses that are not available in the hymnal. A copy of the Rite of Installation is printed below. Be sure to go through and insert the new pastor's name, the congregation's name and choose the him or her where indicated. Please send the bishop's office a draft of your bulletin for this service one week before you plan to print. Seeing many of these, we can help catch problems and provide support. Send to synod@gulfcoastsynod.org.

Seasonal variations in rubrics should be observed. The color for the day is the color of the season. Please be sure to review your liturgical elements of choice with the bishop early in your planning process.

A Confession or Thanksgiving for Baptism may be included prior to the entrance hymn. The processional order is: crucifer, acolytes, bible bearer, vested visiting ministers of other faiths, vested visiting Lutheran ministers, assisting ministers, the pastor to be installed, preaching minister, and Dean. The candidate new pastor participates in the procession but then sits in the front pew with family and friends until the Rite of Installation.

It is wise to have a short rehearsal about an hour before the service, so that all the key leaders know where they are standing and sitting, as well as the liturgical portions for which they have responsibility.

The new pastor may select Scriptures for the service. The new pastor may invite a mentor pastor to preach, or the dean may be asked to preach. Immediately following the sermon is the creed (note the unusual order prescribed for ordinations and installations), followed by the hymn of the day. The Rite of Installation itself follows the hymn of the day and uses the rubrics in *Occasional Services*. The entire order for installation should be printed and placed in the hands of the congregation so responses can be made.

During the last stanza of the hymn of the day, the presenter (may be the president of the congregation, the call committee chair, other lay leader or a local pastor) escorts the new pastor to the foot of the chancel and presents him or her to the Dean. The Dean offers Scriptural admonitions, then asks the questions; the candidate answering from the heart.

Vested pastors and the congregational council may be invited forward for the laying on of hands. Participants place their right hands on the new pastor's shoulders, or if there are many, on someone else who is.

The Assisting Minister offers the Prayers of the Church. The pastor is escorted around the chancel pulpit, font and altar. Or symbols of those pastoral duties may be offered, after which the congregation receives the pastor with applause! The new pastor may respond briefly, following which the s/he is invited to offer the greeting of peace.

One of the historical marks of the Christian community is the gathering of an offering for the poor and for the ministry of the gospel. This essential part of the liturgy creates an opportunity for generosity and awareness of ministry. The offering should be designated for a clear, outwardly focused purpose. It could be designated for a ministry to the local community in which the congregation is intimately involved. It could be designated for the churches of Peru or the Central

African Republic, our synod's companion synods. It could be used to sponsor a child (or children) in one of those synods, to relief for a specific disaster, for the Mission Endowment Fund (supporting seminary students and other ministries), for the bishop's discretionary fund (used to support congregations in times of crisis) or for the pastor's discretionary fund.

The Eucharist is celebrated with the new pastor presiding. Following the benediction a recessional hymn is sung. The assisting minister dismisses the congregation. A reception usually follows! Remind clergy not to disrobe immediately. This is a great photo opportunity! Don't miss it!

Need help?

The synod staff stands ready to assist you with any questions you may have or assistance you may need regarding installation. Please don't hesitate to call us at 281-873-5665.

Rubrics

Color: The color of the season in which the installation is taking place.

Prayer of the Day: Pastors

Lessons: Lessons of the Day or from the service of Installation. Isaiah 52:7-10 is appropriate: How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." Ephesians 4 is very appropriate: "And the Spirit's gifts were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry..." The sending of the seventy is appropriate (Luke 10:1-12, 16-20). Also some of the Good Shepherd texts from John.

Preface: Apostles

Invitations

Once you have put together an invitation, please e-mail a copy to the synod office (synod@gulfcoastsynod.org) and we will send it out to the local pastors and rostered leaders to invite them as well. For sample wording of an installation invitation please see below.

Note to Deans

After the installation is completed please notify the bishop/the synod office in writing (via mail or e-mail). Please note the date of installation, location, and pastor who conducted the installation.



INSTALLATION OF A PASTOR

The Dean of the Conference presides at the service through the installation rite. After the installation, the newly installed pastor assumes the role of presiding minister.

Stand

The Dean addresses the congregation:

Having been authorized by the Church to install **NAME**, our co-worker in the Gospel, as your pastor, I now ask for certification of this *call/appointment*.

The Council President comes forward with the pastor being installed and addresses the Dean:

We, of **CONGREGATION** Lutheran Church after prayerful deliberation, have elected **NAME** to be our pastor. I present *him/her* for installation.

Sit

The Dean addresses the pastor being installed:

Our Lord Jesus Christ says: "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you. Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." (John 20:21-23)

And again: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age." (Matt. 28:18-20).

Hear the words addressed to Timothy: Set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Till I come, attend to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophetic utterance when the council of elders laid their hands upon you. Practice these duties, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress. Take heed to yourself and to your teaching; hold to that, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers. (1 Tim. 4:12-16)

The Dean questions the pastor being installed:

Dean: Pastor **NAME** in the presence of this congregation will you commit yourself to this new trust and responsibility, and promise to discharge your duties in harmony with the constitutions of the church?

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

Dean: Will you preach and teach in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church?

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

Dean: Will you love, serve, and pray for God's people? Will you nourish them with the Word and Holy Sacraments, leading them by your own example in the use of the means of grace, in faithful service and holy living?

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

Dean: Will you give faithful witness in the world, that God's love may be known in all that you do?

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

Dean: Almighty God, who has given you the will to do these things, graciously give you the strength and compassion to perform them.

Pastor: Amen.

Stand

The Dean addresses the congregation:

And you, people of God, will you receive this messenger of Jesus Christ, sent by God to serve God's people with the Gospel of hope and salvation? Will you regard him as a servant of Christ and a steward of the mysteries of God?

Congregation: We will.

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

Congregation: We will.

The Dean addresses the pastor being installed:

The office of pastor is now committed to you in the name of the Father, + and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The newly installed pastor kneels for the blessing. The Dean lays both hands on the pastor. Other pastors and

congregational leaders may be invited to lay hands on as well.

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.

Congregation: Amen.

The pastor stands. The prayers are said.

Assisting Minister: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

Prayers are included for the whole Church, the nations, those in need, the parish, the pastor, the pastor's family, the bishop and all ministers in the Church, all Christians in their vocation, and the community served by the parish.

After the prayers:

Congregation: Amen.

Sit

Three members of the congregation come forward.

The Dean leads the pastor to the pulpit.

First Member: **NAME**, you have been called among us to preach the gospel.

The Dean leads the pastor to the Baptismal font:

Second Member: **NAME**, you have been called among us to baptize.

The Dean leads the pastor to the altar:

Third Member: **NAME**, you have been called among us to administer the sacrament of Holy Communion.

[OR, INSTEAD OF WALKING THE PASTOR AROUND, THE FOLLOWING ALTERNATE LITURGY MAY BE USED.]

A credence table is set near the new pastor on which to place the symbols of the pastoral office.

*The Dean sprinkles the Pastor with the baptismal water, saying, **NAME**, receive this water, and baptize in obedience to our Lord.*

Congregation: Amen.

*The council president or another member of the congregation presents a Bible, saying **NAME**, accept this Bible, and be among us as one who proclaims the Word.*

Congregation: Amen.

*The call committee chair or another member of the congregation presents the bread and wine, saying **NAME**, take this bread and wine, and be among us to break the Bread and bless the Cup.*

Congregation: Amen.

A council member or an elder of the congregation presents the oil cruet or oil stock.

NAME, use this oil, and be among us as a healer and reconciler.

Congregation: Amen.

An LYO-representative or a youth or child presents a prayer book, saying

NAME, receive this book, and be among us as a man/woman of prayer.

Congregation: Amen.

The Dean then says,

NAME, let all these be signs of your call to ministry in this place.

All: Amen.]

The Dean then presents the new minister to the congregation, saying

Brothers and sisters in Christ, greet your new Pastor.

The congregation may offer acclamation with applause. The pastor may offer a word of thanks and vision.

The pastor addresses the congregation.

Pastor: The Peace of the Lord be with you always.

Congregation: And also with you.

Sample Installation Invitation:

(Church Logo)

(Bible Verse and/or Church Mission Statement)

You are invited to worship and celebrate with

_____ **Lutheran Church**

as

The Rev. _____

is installed as Pastor

Sunday, _____, _____

Time

Address

Address

Following the service, please join us for a reception.

Clergy are invited to vest and process (color of the day is green). Clergy are to meet in the parlor for procession.

Offerings gathered will benefit _____.

Getting off to a good start

In any new relationship, the first year is a time to establish healthy practices and patterns that will help ensure the wellbeing of the ministry for years to come. As was stated in A Change of Pastors, on pages 41ff, the transition process does not end with the installation service; in fact, it’s really just getting serious!

Getting to know you

Having the pastor visit everyone in the congregation during the first year is an impossible goal in a larger congregation, and the truth is that it may not be a very useful goal in a smaller congregation either. Why? Because it results in many small “exclusive” conversations rather than a broader conversation among congregational members.

It might be more fruitful to have people sign up for “a visit with the pastor/rostered minister” groups (groups no larger than 10-12) at the church; some in the morning/afternoon and some in the evening. Discussion can be around a short set of questions concerning what people’s hopes and dreams are for mission/ministry. In this way the pastor/rostered minister gets to know people, people get to know each other on a deeper level, **and** the vision/mission of the congregation is moved forward.

Goal setting

After these visits, it is a good practice to revisit the “five primary areas of activity and focus” in Section 13 of the MSP; as well as Section E.1.a-e in the responsibilities page that went along with the Letter of Call. It will be helpful to clearly define some clear first year goals in these areas, create specific strategies for accomplishing those goals, and assign specific people/groups to carry out various strategies.

Goals should always be **S.M.A.R.T.**:

Letter	Major term	Minor terms
S	Specific	Significant, stretching, simple
M	Measurable	Motivational, manageable, meaningful
A	Attainable	Appropriate, achievable, assignable, adjustable, ambitious, aligned
R	Relevant	Result-based, results-oriented, resourced, resonant, realistic
T	Time-bound	Time-oriented, time framed, time-based, time-specific, timetabled

Pastoral/staff support

A pastor or other rostered minister cannot use a group from the congregation as his/her support group or “care committee.” It engenders a confusion of roles and can result in an “inner circle.” Pastors/rostered ministers must find a trusted and confidential *peer* support group outside of the congregation, either among selected pastors/rostered ministers in the area or the conference pastors’ group.

It is also helpful if every pastor finds a spiritual guide *and* a mentor for him/herself.

However, the congregational council/leadership can make sure that the pastor/rostered minister is:

1. Taking his/her two days off per week and that the congregation is respectful of those days. Sunday is NOT a Sabbath day for pastors!
2. Taking his/her vacation; 4 weeks and 4 Sundays per year if full time. Someone once said, “I can do this job in 11 months, but I can’t do it in 12!”
3. Making full use of his/her continuing education. The synod assembly is NOT continuing education. The annual theological conference is NOT continuing education. The Lutheran magazine is NOT theological education. Continuing education should be something that helps and challenges the pastor/rostered minister to grow. It should be something that helps and challenges the ministry of the congregation. Most burnout or stagnation occurs because people are not taking their continuing education seriously!
4. Making sure that the pastor/rostered minister is staying engaged with the other pastors/rostered ministers in the conference and attending scheduled gatherings.

Mutual Ministry Committee (MMC)

The ELCA Model Constitution for Congregations states:

C13.04. A *Mutual Ministry Committee* (in the absence of a mutual ministry committee, the duties shall be fulfilled by the executive committee) shall be appointed jointly by the president [vice president] and the pastor. Term of office shall be two years, with three members to be appointed each successive year.

Even though these people are appointed by the president or vice president of the council, the pastor should be granted very wide latitude in selecting these people. It will take a while for a new pastor to know the congregation well enough to establish this committee.

What is a Mutual Ministry Committee? Look at the name. First, it must be about ministry. Second, it must be about mutual ministry; the ministry of the entire congregation in which both the rostered ministers and the congregation have a share. (Note that the Ministry

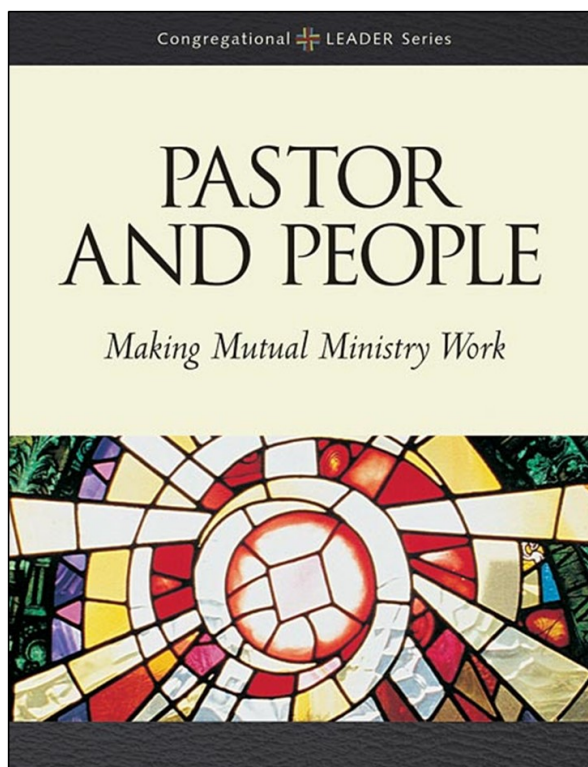
Review at the end of Section 8 reviews the work of the pastor, the congregational council, and the congregation.) All congregational ministry is to be mutual.

This means that the Mutual Ministry Committee is not:

1. A Personnel Committee that focuses on evaluating the work of the pastor or an “ombudsman” for the congregational members.
2. A “support group” or “care committee” for the pastor.
3. An “action committee” through which the pastor gets traction for his/her ideas.

Rather, a MMC is a committee that continually scans the life/mission/ministry of the congregation, as well as the context/community in which the congregation exists, to discern the effectiveness of the congregation’s ministry and how it might be more helpful. In some ways it is an ongoing “transition team;” ensuring that the developmental tasks are ever in motion. Development should never stop!

For a more thorough description and tips for getting started, use the book [Pastor and People](#); available from Augsburg Fortress and Amazon.



How to Minister Effectively in Family, Pastoral, Program, and Corporate Sized Churches by, Roy Oswald, former Senior Consultant, Alban Institute

Clergy may be set up for failure when they move from effective work in one size congregation and begin a new pastorate in a different-sized congregation. If, for example, a pastor is thriving in a Pastoral-sized congregation (50 to 150 active members) and then receives a call to a Program-sized congregation (150 to 350 active members), that pastor will have to make a significant shift in style of ministry to be effective in this new congregation, too. Few middle judicatories pay attention to this transition in context of ministry; thus they fail to prepare their clergy adequately for a new style of pastoral leadership.

I would say it takes an unusually gifted pastor to shepherd a congregation from its birth to a large corporate size. Few clergy have the flexibility required to accomplish all those necessary shifts in style. More is required than simply changing one's behavior. Since not only clergy but members too get stuck at each stage of growth, every time there is a shift in size clergy need to convince the congregation's leaders that a change in their behavior is warranted. Pastors of missions often take a congregation up to a certain size only to reach a plateau at that level. The failure to grow is rarely a conscious choice. Usually there are demographic factors that can be blamed. But at an unconscious level the pastor has concluded that this is about as many people as s/he can handle. The congregation, also at an unconscious level, has colluded with that decision.

The theory of congregational size that I find most workable is Arlin Rothauge's, described in his booklet *Sizing Up a Congregation For New Member Ministry*.¹ It was originally written to help congregations recognize the different ways different-sized churches assimilate new members. When a theory is on target, however, it so accurately reflects reality that it can be applied to other dimensions of a church's life and work. Rothauge's theory elicits consistent "aches" from clergy who are reflecting on their transition from one size parish to another. Whether churches are growing or downsizing, congregations hold on to deeply engrained assumptions about what constitutes a dynamic church and what effective clergy do. The inflexibility of these expectations is an important cause of clergy malfunctioning.

Rothauge sets forth four basic congregational sizes. Each size requires a specific cluster of behaviors from its clergy. The average number of people attending weekly worship and the amount of money being contributed regularly provide the most accurate gauge of church size. Since membership rolls fluctuate wildly depending upon how frequently they are evaluated, they cannot provide an accurate measurement of congregational size. Rothauge also holds that a church's size category is a matter of attitude as much as numbers. I know one congregation that averages 700 at Sunday worship and still functions on a Pastoral model. All the pastor did was preach on Sunday and visit people through the week. The pastor's perception of his job burned him out and eventually cost him his marriage and his ministry.

Here is a brief description of each of Rothauge's four sizes and my understanding of what members expect of clergy in each size. As clergy move into new congregations they will profit from watching how a congregation's expectations of its clergy, growing out of the church's size and consequent dynamics, begin to be projected their way.

The Family Church (fewer than 50 active members)

This small church can also be called a Family Church because it functions like a family with appropriate parental figures. It is the patriarchs and matriarchs who control the church's leadership needs. What Family Churches want from clergy is pastoral care, period. For clergy to assume that they are also the chief executive officer and the resident religious authority is to make a serious blunder. The key role of the patriarch or matriarch is to see to it that clergy do not take the congregation off on a new direction of ministry. Clergy are to serve as the chaplain of this small family. When clergy don't understand this, they are likely to head into a direct

confrontation with the parental figure. It is generally suicide for clergy to get caught in a showdown with the patriarchs and matriarchs within the first five years of their ministry in that place. Clergy should not assume, however, that they have no role beyond pastoral care. In addition to providing quality worship and home/hospital visitation, clergy can play an important role as consultants to these patriarchs or matriarchs, befriending these parent figures and working alongside them, yet recognizing that when these parent figures decide against an idea, it's finished.

Clergy should watch out for the trap that is set when members complain to them about the patriarch or matriarch of the parish and encourage the pastor to take the parental figure on. Clergy who respond to such mutinous bids, expecting the congregation to back them in the showdown, betray their misunderstanding of the dynamics of small church ministry. The high turnover of clergy in these parishes has taught members that in the long run they have to live with old Mr. Schwartz who runs the feed-mill even when they don't like him. Hence it is far too risky for members to get caught siding with pastors who come and go against their resident patriarch/matriarch.

Because these congregations usually cannot pay clergy an acceptable salary, many clergy see them as stepping stones to more rewarding opportunities. It is not unusual for a congregation of this size to list five successive clergy for every ten years of congregational life. As Schaller claims, the longer the pastorates, the more powerful clergy become. The shorter the pastorates, the more powerful laity become. These Family Churches have to develop one or two strong lay leaders at the center of their life. How else would they manage their ongoing existence through those long vacancies and through the short pastorates of the ineffective clergy who are often sent their way?

Our president, Loren Mead, began his ministry in a Family Church in South Carolina. Later in his ministry he attended a clergy conference at which he discovered seven other clergy who had also started their ordained ministry in the same parish. As they talked, the seven clergy realized that, in view of the difference in their styles and the shortness of their tenures, the only way that the parish survived was to take none of them seriously.

One of the worst places to go right out of seminary is to a Patriarchial/Matriarchal Church. Seminarians are up to their eyeballs in new theories and good ideas. They want to see if any of them work. Even though some of those good ideas might be the ticket to their small church's long-term growth and development, the church's openness to trying any of them is next to zero. Sometimes, through the sheer force of personal persuasion, a pastor will talk a congregation into trying a new program or two. Pretty soon parishioners find themselves coming to church events much more than they really need to or want to. As they begin then to withdraw their investment from these new programs, the clergy inevitably take it personally. Concluding that their gifts for ministry are not really valued in this place, they begin to seek a call elsewhere. On the way out of the church they give it a kick, letting the parish know in subtle ways that they are a miserable example of Christian community.

These small congregations have endured such recriminations for decades. The message they get from their executive is that they are a failure because they fail to grow while consuming inordinate amounts of time. Middle judicatories try to merge them, yoke them, close them—mostly to no avail. You can't kill these congregations with a stick. Large churches are far more vulnerable. An exec can place an incompetent pastor in a large church and lose 200 members in one year. Yet the same exec can throw incompetent clergy at Family Churches, leave them vacant for years, ignore them—all with little effect. The Family Church has learned to survive by relying on its own internal leadership.

These congregations need a pastor to stay and love them over at least ten years. This pastor would have to play by the rules and defer to the patriarch's or matriarch's leadership decisions for the first three to five years. At about year four or five, when the pastor did not leave, the congregation might find itself in somewhat of a crisis.

At some level they would be saying, "What do you mean you are going to stay? No clergy stay here. There must be something the matter with you." Then the questioning might begin:

"Can we really trust you? Naw! You are going to leave us like all the rest." In this questioning we can see the pain of these congregations. For a minute, let's put ourselves in their shoes and imagine an ordained leader walking out on us every few years, berating us on the way out. Would we invest in the next pastor who came to us? Not likely! It would be simply too painful. The Family Church may have invested in one five years ago, only to find that the pastor left just when things started to move. Basically these people have learned not to trust clergy who repeatedly abandon ship when they see no evidence of church growth.

I conclude that we need to refrain from sending these congregations seminary trained pastors. History demonstrates that these churches have not been served well by full-time ordained clergy. The Episcopal Diocese of Nevada and the North Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church are among judicatories experimenting with employing persons indigenous to the communities, providing them with some basic training to give long-term pastoral care on a part-time basis. I believe long-term tent-making ministries offer the best possibility for ministering to many of these Patriarchial/Matriarchial congregations.

If denominations and middle judicatories persist in placing newly ordained clergy in these parishes, they should do so only after laying out this theory for these clergy, helping them discover who indeed are the patriarchs and matriarchs of the parish, suggesting some strategies for working with them. If these clergy find it simply too difficult to work with these parental figures, they need to let their executive know promptly. Rather than leaving these newly ordained clergy regretting they pursued ordained ministry in the first place, the exec should move them out of the Family Church.

The Pastoral Church (50 to 150 active members)

Clergy are usually at the center of a Pastoral Church. There are so many parental figures around that they need someone at the center to manage them. A leadership circle, made up of the pastor and a small cadre of lay leaders, replaces the patriarchs and matriarchs of the Family Church. The power and effectiveness of the leadership circle depends upon good communication with the congregation and the ability of the pastor to delegate authority, assign responsibility, and recognize the accomplishments of others. Without such skill, the central pastoral function weakens the entire structure. The clergy person becomes overworked, isolated, and exhausted, may be attacked by other leaders, and finally the harmony of the fellowship circle degenerates.

A key feature of a Pastoral Church is that lay persons experience having their spiritual needs met through their personal relationship with a seminary trained person. In a Pastoral Church it would be rare for a Bible study or a prayer group to meet without the pastor. The pastor is also readily available in times of personal need and crisis. If a parishioner called the pastor and indicated that she needed some personal attention, the pastor would drop over to see her, probably that afternoon but certainly within the week—qualitatively different experience from being told that the first available appointment to see the pastor in her office is two weeks from now. The time demands upon the pastor of a Pastoral Church can become oppressive. However, most members will respond with loyalty to a reasonable level of attention and guidance from this central figure.

A second feature of the Pastoral Church is its sense of itself as a family where everyone knows everyone else. If you show up at church with your daughter Julie by the hand, everyone will greet you and Julie, too. When congregations begin to have 130 to 150 people coming every Sunday morning they begin to get nervous. As Carl Dudley put it in *Unique Dynamics of the Small Church*,² they begin to feel "stuffed." Members wonder about the new faces that they don't know—people who don't know them. Are they beginning to lose the intimate fellowship they prize so highly?

Clergy also begin to feel stressed when they have more than 150 active members whom they try to know in depth. In fact, this is one of the reasons why clergy may keep the Pastoral Church from growing to the next larger size congregation-the Program Church. If clergy have the idea firmly fixed in their head that they are ineffective as a pastor unless they can relate in a profound and personal way with every member of the parish, then 150 active members (plus perhaps an even larger number of inactive members) is about all one person can manage.

There are some clergy who function at their highest level of effectiveness in the Pastoral Church. Given the different clusters of skills required for other sizes of congregations, some clergy should consider spending their entire career in this size congregation. Since the Pastoral Church can offer a pastor a decent salary, clergy do tend to stick around longer. If clergy can regard themselves as successful only when they become pastor of a large congregation, then 65% of mainline Protestant clergy are going to end their career with feelings of failure. Two thirds of mainline Protestant congregations are either Family- or Pastoral-sized churches.

Clergy with strong interpersonal skills fare well in the Pastoral-sized church. These clergy can feed continually on the richness of direct involvement in the highs and lows of people's lives. Clergy who enjoy being at the center of most activities also do well. There are lots of opportunities to preach and lead in worship and to serve as primary instructor in many class settings for both young and old. Outgoing, expressive persons seem to be the best match for the style of ministry in the Pastoral Church. An open, interactive leadership style also seems to suit this size church best.

Growth in the Pastoral Church will depend mainly on the popularity and effectiveness of the pastor. People join the church because they like the interaction between pastor and people. When new people visit the congregation for the first time, it is likely to be the pastor who will make the follow-up house call.

When some congregations grow to the point where their pastor's time and energy is drawn off into many other activities and the one-on-one pastoral relationship begins to suffer, they may hire additional staff to handle these new functions so their pastor can once again have plenty of time for interpersonal caring. Unfortunately, this strategy will have limited success. To begin with, when you hire additional staff you then have a multiple staff, which requires staff meetings, supervision, delegation, evaluation, and planning. These activities draw the pastor deeper into administration. Then, too, additional staff members tend to specialize in such things as Christian education, youth ministry, evangelism, or stewardship, which tends to add to the administrative role of the head of staff rather than freeing his/her time up for pastoral care.

As we move to the next size congregation, notice the change in the diagram of the church's structure. Clergy consider a congregation's transition from Pastoral to Program size the most difficult. One can expect enormous resistance on the part of a Pastoral Church as it flirts with becoming a Program Church. Many churches make an unconscious choice not to make the transition and keep hovering around the level of 150 active members. The two treasured features of a Pastoral Church that will be lost if it becomes a Program Church are ready access to their religious leader and the feeling of oneness as a church family, where everyone knows everyone else and the church can function as a single cell community.

Two things prevent a congregation from making that transition. The first barrier is found in the clergy. When clergy hold onto a need to be connected in depth to all the active members, then they become the bottleneck to growth. The second barrier is found in the lay leaders who are unwilling to have many of their spiritual needs met by anyone except their ordained leader.

It is most helpful to put this theory up on newsprint before the chief decision-making body of the church and ask them where they think they are as a parish. If they have been saying "yes, yes" to church growth with their lips, but "no, no" with their behavior, this theory can bring their resistance to the conscious level by pointing out the

real costs they will face in growing. Churches tend to grow when parish leaders, fully aware of the cost of growth, make a conscious decision to proceed.

Without the backing of key lay leaders, the cost of moving from a Pastoral to a Program Church usually comes out of the pastor's hide. The parish may welcome the pastor's efforts in parish program development while still expecting all the parish calling and one-on-one work to continue at the same high level as before. Burnout and/or a forced pastoral termination can often result.

The Program Church (150 to 350 active members)

The Program Church grows out of the necessity for a high-quality personal relationship with the pastor to be supplemented by other avenues of spiritual feeding. Programs must now begin to fulfill that role.

The well functioning Program Church has many cells of activity, which are headed up by lay leaders. These lay leaders, in addition to providing structure and guidance for these cells, also take on some pastoral functions. The Stewardship Committee gathers for its monthly meeting and the committee chair asks about a missing member. Upon being told that Mary Steward's daughter had to be taken to the hospital for an emergency operation, the chair will allow time for expressions of concern for Mary and her daughter. The chair may include both of them in an opening prayer. If the teacher of an adult class notices that someone in the class is feeling depressed, the teacher will often take the class member aside and inquire about his well-being. Even if the teacher eventually asks the pastor to intervene, the pastor has already gotten a lot of assistance from this lay leader.

Clergy are still at the center of the Program Church, but their role has shifted dramatically. Much of their time and attention must be spent in planning with other lay leaders to ensure the highest quality programs. The pastor must spend a lot of time recruiting people to head up these smaller ministries, training, supervising, and evaluating them and seeing to it that their morale remains high. In essence the pastor must often step back from direct ministry with people to coordinate and support volunteers who offer this ministry. Unless the pastor gives high priority to their spiritual and pastoral needs, those programs will suffer.

To be sure, a member can expect a hospital or home call from the pastor when personal crisis or illness strikes. But members had better not expect this pastor to have a lot of time to drink coffee in people's kitchens. To see the pastor about a parish matter, they will probably have to make an appointment at the church office several weeks in advance.

When clergy move from a Pastoral Church to a Program Church, unless they are able to shift from a primarily interpersonal mode to a program planning and development mode, they will experience tension and difficulty in their new congregation. It is not that clergy will have no further need for their interpersonal skills. Far from it—they need to depend on them even more. But now those interpersonal skills will be placed at the service of the parish program.

Key skills for effective ministry in a Program Church begin with the ability to pull together the diverse elements of the parish into a mission statement. Helping the parish arrive at a consensus about its direction is essential. Next the pastor must be able to lead the parish toward attaining the goals that arise out of that consensus. In the Program Church, clergy need to be able to stand firmly at the center of that consensus. To wilt in the face of opposition to this consensus will be seen as a lack of leadership ability. The Program Church pastor will also need to be able to motivate the most capable lay persons in the parish to take on key components of the parish vision and help make it become a reality. Developing the trust and loyalty of these parish leaders and ensuring their continued spiritual growth and development is another key part of the cluster of skills needed in the Program-sized Church.

For clergy who get their primary kicks out of direct pastoral care work, ministry in a Program Church may leave them with a chronic feeling of flatness and lack of fulfillment. Unless these clergy can learn to derive satisfaction from the work of pastoral administration they should think twice about accepting a call to this size parish.

The Corporate Church (350 or more active members)

The quality of Sunday morning worship is the first thing you usually notice in a Corporate Church. Because these churches usually have abundant resources, they will usually have the finest organ and one of the best choirs in town. A lot of work goes into making Sunday worship a rich experience. The head of staff usually spends more time than other clergy preparing for preaching and worship leadership.

In very large Corporate Churches, the head of staff may not even remember the names of many parishioners. When members are in the hospital, it is almost taken for granted that they will be visited by an associate or assistant pastor, rather than the senior pastor. Those who value highly the Corporate Church experience are willing to sacrifice a personal connection with the senior pastor in favor of the Corporate Church's variety and quality of program offerings.

Sometimes the head pastor is so prominent that the personage of the pastor acquires a legendary quality, especially in the course of a long pastorate. Few may know this person well, but the role does not require it. The head pastor becomes a symbol of unity and stability in a very complicated congregational life.

The Corporate Church is distinguished from the Program Church by its complexity and diversity. The patriarchs and matriarchs return, but now as the governing boards who formally, not just informally, control the church's life and future. Laity lead on many levels, and the Corporate Church provides opportunity to move up the ladder of influence.

Key to the success of the Corporate Church is the multiple staff and its ability to manage the diversity of its ministries in a collegial manner. Maintaining energy and momentum in a Corporate Church is very difficult when there is division within the parish staff. Any inability to work together harmoniously is especially evident during Sunday worship where any tensions among the ordained leadership of the parish will manifest themselves in subtle ways.

It is at this point that clergy making the transition to the Corporate Church find themselves most vulnerable and unsupported. Our denominational systems do little to equip clergy to work collegially within a multiple staff. A three-day workshop on the multiple staff is a bare introduction. Leaders in industry with a master's degree in personnel management still make serious mistakes in hiring and developing leaders for the corporation. The head of staff of a Corporate Church learns to manage a multiple staff by trial and error. Sacrificing a few associate and assistant clergy on the altar of experience is the price the church pays for such lack of training.

For the most part we clergy are not taught to work collegially. In seminary we compete with one another for grades. Each of us retreats to his or her own cubicle to write term papers. There is little interaction in class. In seminary we don't really have to take each other seriously. This might change if, for example, a professor were to assign four seminarians to complete research on a church doctrine, write one paper, and receive a group grade. In that kind of learning atmosphere, we would have to take one another on and argue about our different theological perspectives and forms of piety. Unless our training can begin to equip us for collegial ministry, our seminaries will continue to turn out lone rangers who don't really have to work with other clergy until they get to the Corporate Church or the larger Program Church. By that time our patterns have been set.

The clergy who are called as head of staff in a Corporate Church are usually multi-skilled persons who have proven their skill in a great variety of pastoral situations. Now, however, in a multiple staff, the senior minister

will need to delegate some of those pastoral tasks to other full-time staff members, who will inevitably want to do them differently. Learning to allow these people to do things their own way is in itself a major new demand.

Our research with the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator indicates that congregations are best served when the multiple staff includes different types. The more diverse the staff, the greater its ability to minister to a diverse congregation. But this requirement for diversity makes multiple staff functioning more complicated: the more diverse the staff, the harder it is to understand and support one another's ministries.

Lay leaders are generally completely baffled by the inability of ordained people to work collegially. "If our religious leaders aren't able to get along, what hope is there for this world?" they may wonder. Lay leaders could help enormously by seeing to it that there is money in the budget for regular consultative help for the staff. This help is not needed only when tensions arise. Multiple staffs need to be meeting regularly with an outside consultant to keep lines of communication open and difficulties surfaced.

When the multiple staff is having fun working well together, this graceful collegiality becomes contagious throughout the Corporate Church. Lay people want to get on board and enjoy the camaraderie. The parish has little difficulty filling the many volunteer jobs needed to run a Corporate Church.

In addition to learning to manage a multiple staff, clergy making the transition to head of staff need to hone their administrative skills. These clergy are becoming chief executive officers of substantive operations. Yet I would emphasize leadership skills over management skills. While managers can manage the energy of a parish, leaders can generate energy. The Corporate Church needs leaders who know how to build momentum. Otherwise, even when managed well, these large churches run out of gas and begin to decline.

In summary, the most difficult transitions in size are from Pastoral to Program or, when downsizing, from Program to Pastoral. These are two very different ways to be church. More is required than a theoretical vision of the shift. We need to deal with the fact that a shift in size at this level just doesn't feel right to people. Somewhere deep inside they begin to sense that it doesn't feel like church anymore.

In order to help clergy and key lay leaders grasp the difference between these two sizes of churches, I have developed a simple questionnaire that I call a differentiation exercise. Rather than have an audience simply circle answers to prepared questions, I like to send the "a's" to one side of the room and the "b's" to the other side. You can see at a glance where everyone stands on an issue, and the two groups can talk to each other about their choices. Since the questions deal with choices clergy need to make between two competing activities, I ask clergy to remain silent until the lay leaders have answered. Then I ask clergy what their personal preferences are on each question. I encourage clergy to choose the activity they would most enjoy rather than the one they believe might claim a higher parish priority. Here are the questions:

Choice Points for Clergy If your pastor has only limited time available in his/her week, would you prefer that he/she choose to:

- A. Do more visiting to shut-ins?
- B. Put more time into sermon preparation?

- A. Attend a wedding reception?
- B. Go on a retreat with parish staff?

- A. Call on prospective members?
- B. Conduct a training session for church officers?

- A. Visit a bereaved family?
- B. Help two church officers resolve a conflict?

- A. Make a hospital call on a fringe member?
- B. Attend a continuing education event?

- A. Engage in pastoral counseling with members?
- B. Attend a planning event with officers?

- A. Do more parish calling?
- B. Recruit leaders for parish events?

- A. Attend an activity with parish youth?
- B. Critique a meeting with a church officer?

I have discovered several things in using this questionnaire:

Congregations may be Program size yet still require their clergy to attend to all the "a" activities. This is a perfect prescription for burnout. It can also lead to scapegoating clergy as "bad" because they don't accomplish all the tasks in the "a" column while they are also expected to crank out quality programs for the parish.

Some clergy in Pastoral-sized Churches should be focusing their energies and attention on the "a" activities. But because their background or training is in Program Churches, they continue to concentrate on the "b" activities or feel guilty because they aren't doing so.

Clergy and laity often disagree on priorities for clergy. This exercise often surfaces those differences quickly and makes role negotiation possible.

Staffing for Growth

Some congregations do not grow because they are not staffed for growth. If, for example, you are a Program Church, expecting your pastor to assist you in developing and executing quality programs in the church, yet you also expect your pastor to do pastoral calling in homes, you probably have a pastor who is doing neither task well and is burning out trying to do it all. Unless those pastoral expectations change or you add more staff, the congregation will not grow, as members are going to be dissatisfied with both the programs that are offered and the fact that they are not receiving the pastoral care they desire.

As a rule of thumb, if you desire to staff for growth, you need one full-time program person on your staff for every one hundred active members. (This does not include support staff such as janitors or secretaries.) Active members refers to how many are attending worship on the average year around. You are staffing for maintenance if you are just slightly under that figure. You are staffing for decline if you are seriously under that figure.

Growing churches see that their members as well as their visitors receive adequate pastoral care during times of crisis or need. People well cared for pastorally are inclined to invite their friends and family members to become affiliated with their parish. When a new family to your area is having difficulty, having a staff member make a call to discover ways the parish can meet needs makes a deep impression. Without that call, they are less likely to think of joining your congregation.

The addition of a paid professional, i.e., youth worker, religious education specialist, business manager, usually

pays for itself within twelve to eighteen months. For example, a congregation with 225 active members that hires a third full-time staff member to provide better quality ministry will most likely grow to 300 members.

Part II: When Membership Declines

There are times when, no matter how capable, clergy cannot reverse the downward slide of congregational membership. The reasons may be simply demographic: at times certain areas of the country become depressed and begin to decline in population. In these areas, the older people may stay, but younger workers need to move elsewhere to find work.

What then are the parish dynamics when a congregation becomes smaller? What do clergy moving into those congregations need to pay attention to when the membership shrinks to the next size?

From Corporate to Program Size Church

The first thing these congregations are likely to lose is their ability to support a large multiple staff. The decision to cut down the full- and part-time church staff requires care. Areas of ministry that have been managed by the core staff will need to be turned over to church volunteers. All Corporate Churches depend upon volunteers to do much of the work. Lay leaders who chair important committees have had the benefit of a staff person to confer with and to manage some of the administrative work of the committees. When staff is cut, these lay volunteers will need to take charge more fully, delegating the follow-through work that was previously carried out by a staff person.

Corporate Churches often have amassed some endowment funds. There will be a strong temptation to use some of these funds to support certain staff positions with the rationale that these staff members will help the church regain its former size. Such a strategy needs to be evaluated carefully. It may set the staff members up for failure because the church lacks the commitment, energy, and potential to make these former ministries flourish. Instead, new areas of ministry, which do have vision and commitment behind them, may need to be developed. If so, they will discover their own funding and not be dependent upon endowment funds.

Deciding which staff positions to cut is difficult work, yet it must be done. It is easy to get caught between loyalties to faithful, hardworking staff members and a mission emphasis that might dictate retaining areas of ministry that do not correspond with present staff persons' skills.

The place to start with all these decisions is to engage the core leadership of the parish in an assessment and planning process. I would recommend engaging an outside consultant and allowing plenty of time for this period of reflection, letting go, assessment, and goal setting. I recommend beginning with a historical reflection process in which members can review the history of the parish, identify the strengths that have characterized the church's past and that need to be built into its future. Leaders can then confront directly some of the reasons for the decline in membership. Important grieving needs to take place during this process. To move too quickly to a mission statement would be to short-circuit an important developmental stage in moving to a new identity as a Program Church. People are going to have to let go of an image and an identity of being the biggest and the best. The Program Church has many strengths, yet the core leaders may not see those strengths because they have not adequately dealt with their grief about the death of "Old First Church."

From Program to Pastoral Church

Just as the movement from Pastoral Church to Program Church is experienced as the most difficult and traumatic, so moving from Program to Pastoral Church will present the congregation with a difficult transition. An identity needs to be relinquished. The wonderful team of volunteers that made everything happen in the

church has largely disappeared. Many probably left because of burnout and sought a Corporate Church where they could rest and have their wounds healed.

There may be a faithful remaining core who will be tempted to try to pump the church up again by sheer commitment and energy. This faithful remnant needs to be spared the discouragement inherent in such an effort. Some serious downsizing needs to take place whereby all the separate program emphases of the parish are collapsed into a few small working groups. For example, rather than having separate committees for Evangelism, Stewardship, Christian Education, Property, Social Ministry, Music, and Worship, these all may need to be combined into a Committee on Parish Life or to be reclaimed by the Vestry/ Session/Council/Consistory. One person on these decision-making groups can receive all the mail from the national church on one particular program emphasis. That person will occasionally head up a task force to accomplish certain goals in that area of ministry when such an effort is deemed important by the chief decision-making body.

The key issue in downsizing from Program to Pastoral Church is the responsible management of volunteer energies. A Program Church that shrinks to Pastoral size will surely burn out its lay leaders. Soon cynicism, disillusionment, and fatigue begin to permeate the whole parish. People start serving on two or three committees just to keep them afloat. It's difficult to get the committees to do anything significant because everyone is simply too tired.

The downsizing strategy may include suspending all parish committees and programs and declaring sabbaticals for all parish leaders. Whatever activities occur in the parish during this time should be focused on the spiritual nurture of these parish leaders. The sabbatical period should end with a retreat or workshop at which members are invited to assess where God seems to be calling them to serve.

During or following this period of suspended activity, key leaders can be invited to an assessment and planning process. What is a parish identity that is both viable and energy-generating? Once members have gone through the process of grieving the loss of their former identity, they can discern a vision of the Pastoral Church that fills them with hope and excitement. Can this group once again find energy in doing things as a single unit, such as having parish dinners and activities in which everyone can participate? As they move from multiple services to one worship service, can they begin to feel the advantages of having everyone worshipping together again?

Finally, can they begin to appreciate having more quality time with their pastor? Can they begin to allow their pastor to become the primary source of their spiritual feeding? What was done formerly in formal program settings can now be done informally around the edges. The pastor can once again know my teen-age son personally rather than having to insure that there is a youth group to minister to him. The pastor needs to let go of many administrative and program development tasks and begin to appear in people's lives in a variety of informal settings. Visiting people in their places of employment to experience the context of 'a person's lay ministry might be a good place to start. People will let go of some of their program needs much more easily when they begin to feel more cared for personally.

Moving From Pastoral to Family Sized Church

This transition will be inaugurated by a congregation's discovery that it can no longer support a full-time ordained person. This is likely to occur when a pastor resigns, and in working things through with their middle judicatory officials, the church leaders become clear that they can no longer afford a pay package that will meet the minimum salary scale set by the denomination.

This discovery is often a traumatic point in the life of a parish. Members see inability to afford their own pastor as a sign of failure. For many of the older members, the loss is seen in no longer having a pastor to live in their parsonage. We should not underestimate the unconscious anxiety that is produced in the lives of many people

when they realize they do not have a religious authority available to them around the clock in their community. They may rarely have taken advantage of the opportunity to call on the services of the person living in their parsonage, yet it was more the possibility than the actuality that was important to them.

One of the clear advantages of a congregation moving from a Pastoral to a Family Size Church is that such an abnormally high percentage of their income does not now have to go into supporting a pastor. They may find they have some money to support other kinds of parish activities.

The other advantage, which may come as a blessing in disguise, is that members need to get clear about what pastoral services are essential to them in order for them to function well as a religious community. That clarity has the effect of helping the parish leaders also become clear about the roles and responsibilities that will not be covered by a pastor and that need to be picked up by lay volunteers. Seen in a positive light, this clarity can open up opportunities for fulfilling ministries for some lay leaders.

True to its nature as a Patriarchial/Matriarchial Church, the parish needs to assume control of its own life, taking over all leadership functions and delegating pastoral care ministries to clergy. The members need to stay focused on the direction of their parish and not allow it to be swayed by the ideas of clergy who have only a temporary investment in the parish.

From Family Sized Church to Nonexistence

There have been congregations that, when confronted with the alternative of either living or dying, have made the conscious decision to die. In the process of dying well they generated so much energy that they changed their minds. One UCC congregation in St. Louis hired an interim pastor who was to help them die well. That was eight years ago. They are a thriving congregation.

A Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) congregation in Bethesda, Maryland, voted two years ago to terminate their life, and they have effectively done so, merging their assets with a neighboring congregation. Their long-term pastor saw them through the closure and was himself awarded a sabbatical once the parish had closed. Their decision was quite deliberate, and even though they had endowment funds that could have kept them open, they chose instead to end with dignity and merge with a neighboring congregation.

The above two examples are anecdotal data on congregational closures. I suspect there are more such examples. It would be helpful if someone would undertake to compile a variety of models from which congregations may choose. In this era of church decline I believe we need to get better at shutting down more quickly and effectively. There are some congregations that need and want to die. Dying well is qualitatively different from simply fading into oblivion. We need to learn how to help churches die well.

NOTES

1. Rothauge, Arlin. *Sizing Up a Congregation for New Member Ministry*. New York: The Episcopal Church Center, 815 Second Ave., New York 10017.
2. Dudley, Carl. *Unique Dynamics of the Small Church*. Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute. Another helpful book is Lyle Schaller's *Looking in the Mirror* (Abingdon Press 1984).

This article originally appeared in the March/April 1991 issue, and the May/June 1991 issue, of *Action Information*.



The Rostered Leader Profile (RLP) is intended for use by ordained and lay rostered ministers (Associates in Ministry, Diaconal Ministers and Deaconesses) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as well as by First Call candidates for rostered ministry. It provides basis introductory information in the anticipation of the candidates' interviews with call committees. Once complete, this form is submitted electronically to your synodical bishop for review and distribution to the selected synods, congregations and organizations of the church.

Date Completed: _____

Part I: PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Identification

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	MIDDLE NAME
PREFERRED TITLE	SUFFIX	LAST NAME AT BIRTH
FULL NAME		

Preferred Contact Information

ADDRESS LINE1	ADDRESS LINE2	
CITY	STATE	
COUNTRY		
PREFERRED PHONE	CELL PHONE	E-MAIL ADDRESS
DATE OF ORDINATION		
ELCA ROSTER	ROSTER STATUS	SYNOD OF ROSTER OR CANDIDACY

Language Proficiencies

PRIMARY LANGUAGE	SECOND LANGUAGE	THIRD LANGUAGE
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2. Educational and Vocational Work History

Formal Education-:

DEGREE	FIELD OF STUDY	YEAR
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SCHOOL	CITY, STATE, COUNTRY	
DEGREE	FIELD OF STUDY	YEAR
SCHOOL	CITY, STATE, COUNTRY	
DEGREE	FIELD OF STUDY	YEAR
SCHOOL	CITY, STATE, COUNTRY	
DEGREE	FIELD OF STUDY	YEAR
SCHOOL	CITY, STATE, COUNTRY	

Life Long Learning Experiences :

YEAR	TOPIC OR TITLE OF CLASS	CONTACT HOURS
YEAR	TOPIC OR TITLE OF CLASS	CONTACT HOURS
YEAR	TOPIC OR TITLE OF CLASS	CONTACT HOURS
YEAR	TOPIC OR TITLE OF CLASS	CONTACT HOURS
YEAR	TOPIC OR TITLE OF CLASS	CONTACT HOURS

Work History

In chronological order and beginning with the most recent, list up to five significant work experiences.

- | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| ORGANIZATION | RECENT POSITION/TITLE | YEAR (FROM/ TO) |
| CITY, STATE | | |
- | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| ORGANIZATION | RECENT POSITION/TITLE | YEAR (FROM/ TO) |
| CITY, STATE | | |



ORGANIZATION	RECENT POSITION/TITLE	YEAR (FROM/ TO)
CITY, STATE		

3.

ORGANIZATION	RECENT POSITION/TITLE	YEAR (FROM/ TO)
CITY, STATE		

4.

ORGANIZATION	RECENT POSITION/TITLE	YEAR (FROM/ TO)
CITY, STATE		

Current Ministry: FIRST CALL CANDIDATES should use this section to describe the internship site.

ORGANIZATION	RECENT POSITION/TITLE	FULLTIME/ PARTTIME
CITY, STATE		

Community Setting:

Size	Type
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CURRENT MINISTRY

ELCA CONGREGATION ID	AVG WEEKLY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE	TOTAL CURRENT BUDGET	MISSION SUPPORT TO THE LARGER CHURCH
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Describe the organization or agency as to its purpose, size and relationship to the large church.

Part II: COMPETENCIES OR SPECIALIZATIONS

Areas Of Expertise

1.	2.	3.
4.	5.	



Areas Of Strength

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Samples of Competencies

Innovation / Creativity

Participant in the Larger Church

Pastoral Care and Visitation

Inter-personal Climate

SAMPLE



Social Ministry

References

Synodical Bishop

ORGANIZATION

SYNOD

DAY PHONE NUMBER

EVENING PHONE NUMBER

E-MAIL

An ELCA Clergy Person

ORGANIZATION

SYNOD

DAY PHONE NUMBER

EVENING PHONE NUMBER

E-MAIL

Lay Person (Current)

NAME

ORGANIZATION AND TITLE

DAY PHONE NUMBER

EVENING PHONE NUMBER

E-MAIL

Lay Person (Non-Current)

NAME

ORGANIZATION AND TITLE

DAY PHONE NUMBER

EVENING PHONE NUMBER

E-MAIL

Supervisor/Colleague

NAME

ORGANIZATION AND TITLE

DAY PHONE NUMBER

EVENING PHONE NUMBER

E-MAIL



7. Reference's Recommendation

FIRST CALL CANDIDATES: A Reference Recommendation does not need to be identified.

NAME ORGANIZATION AND TITLE

DAY PHONE NUMBER E-MAIL

Part III: REFLECTIONS ON MINISTRY:

Respond to each of the six questions below. Your responses are limited to approximately 150 words for each question.

Calling: You are called as a Child of God and into rostered service in this church. Reflect theologically on your sense of call and the way it shapes your life and work.

[Empty text box for Calling response]

Convictions: Identify the three most prominent themes that others would see strongly evident in your speaking, teaching, leading and living.

[Empty text box for Convictions response]

Context: Describe the ministry setting(s) that would energize you and make the best use of your gifts, skills and passions.

[Empty text box for Context response]

Accomplishments: How has your current ministry setting developed in the last three years, and in what ways have you contributed to this growth or development?



Denominational Relationship:

What are your hopes for the ELCA? Describe how you help others understand their relationship to the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

[Empty text box for Denominational Relationship response]

Public Ministry:

In your public role as a leader within the congregation or organization, how would you describe your preferred approach, style and manner?

[Empty text box for Public Ministry response]

9. PERSONAL MINISTRY STATEMENT

In fifty words or less, describe your vision of your calling in ministry and your passion for ministry.

[Empty text box for Personal Ministry Statement response]



Part IV: CANDIDATE COMMENTARY

The candidate Commentary is an optional component that allows you to expand your Rostered Leader Profile with information that reveals your passions for ministry, your expertise, your experience or your visions for ministry. You are invited to be creative as you add any commentary that you feel will support this RLP.

SAMPLE



If requested, are you able to supply the following items?

- * Video recording of a worship, preaching, teaching or speaking occasion?
- * Audio recording of a worship, preaching, teaching or speaking occasion?
- * Most recent Congregation/ Organization Annual Report?
- * Samples of writing or communication pieces from your ministry?
- * Letters of Reference?
- * Resume or curriculum vitae?

Selected Answer

10. Comments or Explanations (For use in reference to any response made on this form.)

11. Disclosure

Out of care for the church, the following questions are asked of all rostered leaders and First Call candidates who are making themselves available for conversation with small committees.

Selected Answer

Have you ever engaged in, been accused of, charged with, or convicted of illegal conduct or a crime, including conduct resulting in suspension or revocation of your driver's license?

Do you have any addictive behavior (including a history of drug, alcohol, or pornographic addictions) that might interfere with your ability to serve or continue serving as a rostered leader?

Have you ever engaged in, been accused of, investigated for, sued, or charged with sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, substance abuse, child or spousal neglect or abuse, or financial improprieties?

While in candidacy or on the roster, have you ever engaged in, been accused of, investigated for, charged with, or disciplined for any conduct prescribed in Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline?

Are you living in accord with Vision and Expectations and Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline for rostered persons in the ELCA and do you intend to continue to live in compliance?

Have you ever engaged in any behavior or been involved in any situations that, if they became known to the church, might seriously damage your ability to begin or continue in ministry?

Comments or explanations to Disclosure questions from the previous page:



12. Certification

CERTIFY BY

CERTIFY DATE

AGREE/DISAGREE

13. Reviewed

APPLICANT NAME

APPLICANT TITLE

SYNOD NAME

DATE

REVIEWED BY BISHOP

REVIEWED ON

SIGNATURE

Authorization and Release

AUTHORIZED BY

DATE:

SIGNATURE

Part V: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This information requested below is for use by Synod Bishops and members of the synod staff as they seek to identify suitable candidates for call to congregations.

15. Personal Information

_____ DATE OF BIRTH	_____ GENDER	_____ ETHNICITY		
Present Relationship	_____ RELATIONSHIP STATUS	_____ SPOUSE NAME	_____ PROFESSION	_____ ELCA ROSTERED ?
				_____ ELCA CANDIDACY?



SAME GENDER PARTNER NAME: _____ PROFESSION: _____ ELCA ROSTERED? _____ ELCA CANDIDACY? _____

Prev. Spouse(s):

NAME _____ DATE OF BEGINNING _____ DATE OF ENDING _____ MARRIAGE ENDED BY: _____

NAME _____ DATE OF BEGINNING _____ DATE OF ENDING _____ MARRIAGE ENDED BY: _____

Prev. Partner(s):

NAME _____ DATE OF BEGINNING _____ DATE OF ENDING _____ MARRIAGE ENDED BY: _____

NAME _____ DATE OF BEGINNING _____ DATE OF ENDING _____ MARRIAGE ENDED BY: _____

If you have more than two previous spouses or previous partners mark here and give details in a letter to your synodical bishop.

In establishing and nurturing a relationship of trust between a rostered leader and his or her synodical bishop and congregation or other ministry, honesty and forthrightness are vital. To assist the synod staff in its discernment with you, please write briefly about any concerns or additional factors that may bear on your present or future response to these questions about relationships. (For example, a marital relationship or same-gender partnership experiencing difficulties, the possibility of entering a marriage, the possibility of entering a same-gender partnership)

List the name and ages of any children who live with you in your household.

NAME _____	AGE _____	NAME _____	AGE _____
NAME _____	AGE _____	NAME _____	AGE _____
NAME _____	AGE _____	NAME _____	AGE _____

HEALTH REOURMENT/SPECIAL NEEDS/IN HOUSEHOLD? EXPLAIN _____

OPENNESS TO CALL _____

DATE AVAILABLE _____

Special Considerations (check all that apply) :

Certified by Evangelical Outreach and Congregational Mission for Mission Development

In conversation with ELCA Global Mission

Interested in pursuing graduate or other studies

Skilled/experienced in multi-cultural ministry

Interested in pursuing graduate or other studies



16. Geographic Preference

OPEN TO GLOBAL SERVICE

REGION 1	REGION 2	REGION 3
REGION 4	REGION 5	REGION 6
REGION 7	REGION 8	REGION 9

17. Ministry Preferences

Ministry site

Congregations

- Organized
 New mission start
 Redevelopment
 Bilingual/multicultural

Preferred size of congregation

- 1-50
 51-150
 151-250
 251-400
 401-700
 Over 700

Preferred parish types

- Single site
 Two-point parish
 3 or more point parish
 Ecumenical

Church-Related Organizations

- Camp or Conference Center
 Military
 Hospice
 Seminary
 Social Ministry Organization
 Prison
 Hospital
 School
 Ecumenical Organization
 College or University
 Residential Care

Synodical and Churchwide Ministries

- Synod Staff
 Churchwide Staff
 Global Service Setting

Ministry position

- Solo Pastor
 Senior Pastor/ Head of Staff
 Associate/Assistant Pastor
 Program Staff
 Campus Ministry
 Chaplain
 Administrator
 Intentional Interim
 Professor /Teacher/Educator
 Youth and Family Ministry
 Music Ministry
 Camping Ministry
 Pastor Developer/ Redeveloper
 Other Specialized Ministry



Community Size

- Rural
- Medium city (50,000-249,999)
- Suburb within 10 miles of a large city
- Small town(under 10,000)
- Suburb near a medium City
- Suburb outside 10 miles of a large city
- Small city (10,000-49,999)
- Large city (250,000 or more)

Community Type

- Bedroom community
- Industrial
- Ranching
- College or University
- Inner city
- Resort
- Farming
- Mining/logging
- Retirement

18. Current Annual Compensation

Indicate your current Defined Compensation. "Defined Compensation" is described by the ELCA Board of Pensions as the gross cash salary paid to the staff member. In the case of clergy, Defined Compensation includes any housing allowance (whether in cash or the annual cash value of a parsonage), Social Security Tax offset, and /or furnishings allowance if paid directly to the staff member.

Current Annual Compensation: _____ Minimum Compensation for next Call: _____

19. Discernment Process

What factors indicate to you that this is an appropriate time to consider a change of call and what process of discernment have you used to reach this decision? (Answer in approximately 150 words maximum).



20. Other Information

What other information would assist the bishop in recommending you; would help to explain your answers above; or is information you believe the bishop should know? (Approximately 150 words maximum.)

SAMPLE



AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE

ROSTERED LEADERS: A signed copy of this page of the Rostered Leader Profile MUST be mailed, faxed or emailed as a PDF attachment to your synodical bishop and to the person filling out your reference form. Your profile is not complete without this page being on file in your synod's office.

CALL or SEARCH COMMITTEES: A signed copy of the Authorization and Release should be forwarded to those references and others who are being asked for a recommendation or comment.

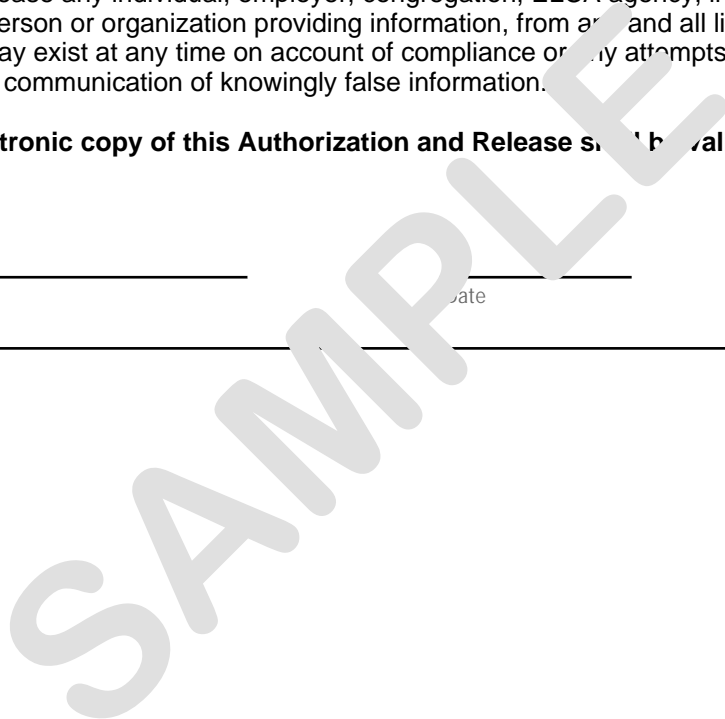
AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE

I, _____ authorize any references, supervisors, ELCA agencies, or any other person or organization to give the congregation, agency, institution or organization any information (including opinions) regarding my character and fitness for ministry. I also release any individual, employer, congregation, ELCA agency, institution, organization, or official, reference, or any other person or organization providing information, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may exist at any time on account of compliance or any attempts to comply with this authorization, excepting only the communication of knowingly false information.

A facsimile, photocopy or electronic copy of this Authorization and Release shall be valid as the original.

SIGNATURE

Date



Ministry Performance Evaluation

	Well done	Adequate	Needs Improvement	
1. Understanding of ministry				
Pastor demonstrates a clear understanding of responsibilities in this area (ELCA Model Constitution C9.03):				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> preaching 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> administering the sacraments 				
Council members demonstrate a clear understanding of their responsibilities in this area (C12.04):				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> stating the congregation's mission, conducting long-range planning, and evaluating the council's activities 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintaining supportive relationships with the pastor and staff and assisting in annual evaluation of their ministries modeling a faithful lifestyle 				
The climate or culture of the congregation encourages members to use their gifts for ministry in the congregation and community.				

Ministry Performance Evaluation

	Well done	Adequate	Needs Improvement	
2. Caring for the needs of the congregation				
Pastor demonstrates a clear understanding of responsibilities in this area (C9.03 and C9.12):				
• conducting worship				
• providing pastoral care				
• offering instruction and services for confirmation and marriage, visiting the sick, and conducting funerals				
• supervising the congregation's schools and organizations				
• installing council members				
• administering discipline with the council				
• keeping accurate records on baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, and membership				
• submitting statistics to the synod annually				
Council members demonstrate a clear understanding of their responsibilities in this area (C12.04):				
• seeking to involve all members of the congregation in congregational life				

Ministry Performance Evaluation

	Well done	Adequate	Needs Improvement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> overseeing the administration of the congregation 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> arranging for pastoral services in the pastor's absence 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> handling the congregation's financial and property matters 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> preparing an annual budget 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring that provisions of the constitution are carried out 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> submitting a comprehensive report at the annual meeting 				
<p>The climate or culture of the congregation encourages members to assume responsibilities and leadership roles and follow through on their commitments.</p>				
3. Taking Christ's mission into the world				
<p>Pastor demonstrates a clear understanding of responsibilities in this area (C9.03):</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> speaking for poor and oppressed people, calling for justice, and proclaiming God's love for the world 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> promoting the Kingdom of God 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> encouraging qualified individuals to consider ordained ministry or other rostered service 				

Ministry Performance Evaluation

	Well done	Adequate	Needs Improvement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> distributing information about the ELCA and its ministry 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> encouraging the congregation to support the synod and Church-wide organization 				
Council members demonstrate a clear understanding of their responsibilities in this area (C12.04):				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> encouraging partnership with the synod and ELCA and the use of ELCA resources 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> inviting qualified individuals to consider ordained ministry or other rostered service 				
Members of the congregation are willing to actively invite others to:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> worship and other ministry opportunities 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> serve non-members in the name of Christ 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> carry out the work of Jesus Christ in the world today 				
4. Mutual ministry				
Pastor demonstrates a clear understanding of responsibilities in this area:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> supervising staff members 				

Ministry Performance Evaluation

	Well done	Adequate	Needs Improvement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communicating well with the council 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> caring for our mutual life together in ways that create a positive climate 				
<p>Council members demonstrate a clear understanding of their responsibilities in this area:</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communicating well with the pastor 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> caring for our mutual life together in ways that create a positive climate 				
<p>The climate or culture of the congregation encourages members to care for one another and for our mutual life together in ways that create a positive climate.</p>				
5. Overall ratings				
<p>Overall, the pastor is functioning effectively.</p>				

Ministry Performance Evaluation

	Well done	Adequate	Needs Improvement	
Overall, the congregation council is functioning effectively.				
Overall, our congregation is functioning effectively.				