

# EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA CENTRAL STATES SYNOD



## Calling a Rostered Leader

When a congregation calls a pastor or lay rostered leader (diaconal minister, associate in ministry, deaconess), many people have responsibilities. The Office of the Bishop of the Central States Synod is ready to assist the congregation, the council and the call committee, as well as candidates for call, in this process of discerning the Holy Spirit's work to call a servant leader to ministry.

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## STEP ONE: CLOSURE—The Congregation Council

### When Your Rostered Leader Resigns

When a rostered leader submits a letter of resignation to the congregation/parish council, the council has a new set of responsibilities. As soon as possible, the council notifies both the congregation and the Office of the Bishop about the resignation, including the date the resignation is effective. In the case of a pastor's resignation, the bishop's representative will work with the council to provide transitional ministry, which may include the service of an interim pastor. *After* the interim period has begun, the bishop's representative will work with the council with regard to the formation of a call committee.

### Before Your Rostered Leader Leaves

Because a resignation signals the end of an important relationship, congregation/parish members may experience feelings associated with grief: sadness, anger, anxiety, etc. In order to assist the congregation in beginning to move through this experience, the council plans a significant farewell event and closure service for the resigning leader and his/her family. A service for Farewell and Godspeed can be found in the book of *Occasional Services*, page 151. The council also informs the congregation that it is in contact with the synod office to arrange for pastoral leadership.

When it is a pastor who is leaving, it is important that the council president make sure two documents are completed and filed with the synod office: a **Certification of Church Records** and a **Certification of Financial Obligations**. The call process cannot continue until these forms are received.

An **exit interview** with the rostered leader can be very helpful for all involved. It is best to appoint a few people to conduct that interview. The information received is then presented to the council.

### Arranges Transitional Ministry

When the rostered leader resigns/retires, that person is no longer available to perform pastoral duties in the congregation. The synod has adopted a policy regarding boundaries for former pastors who have **resigned** and those who have **retired**. In order to provide pastoral support for the congregation during the time of transition, the council and the bishop's representative identify persons available to serve. In the case of a pastor who is resigning, when intentional interim pastors are available, they are utilized. When pastors or other leaders are available but do not have the training, coaching is provided. The interim period may include participation in Healthy Congregations workshops, reading books on congregational life in the current context, and workshops that help a congregation understand its history and its place in God's mission better. The council will meet with the potential interim pastor to determine the purposes, duties, and mutual expectations (including compensation) for this ministry. The rostered leader who is appointed for the interim ministry is **not eligible** to be called to the congregation. The council president, secretary, and interim pastor sign a Covenant Agreement and forward a copy to the synod office. Both the congregation office and interim pastor retain a copy. The appropriate model Covenant Agreement is available from the bishop's representative.

### **Completes a Position Description**

The council completes a **Position Description**, which describes the ministry position, including compensation, vacation and continuing education expectations, for the future rostered leader. This form should be filed with the Synod Office before the Call Committee is formed. A copy of the latest synod compensation guidelines is available online and should be consulted closely while completing the Position Description.

### **Appoints the Call Committee**

The council consults the congregation constitution for special provisions regarding the call committee's composition and appointment. If no special provisions exist, the model constitution for congregations (C13.05) suggests that a call committee separate from the council be appointed. **Suggestions for selecting a call committee** are provided. Normally, the committee has six members representing the spectrum of the congregation's membership. All ages should be represented, as well as someone new to the church and someone who is a long-time member. Members must be spiritually and emotionally mature, and be able to commit to attendance at every meeting of the committee. When the call is to a parish, each congregation of the parish should be represented on the call committee. The council also determines the chairperson of the call committee. The chairperson is responsible for maintaining regular communication with the congregation council. The chairperson must be able to communicate via email with the Call Process Minister as documents will be exchanged electronically.

The council instructs the chairperson of the call committee to contact the bishop's representative in order to schedule a call process orientation with a Call Process Minister, who will continue to be the contact person for the call committee chair throughout the process. Council members are invited and encouraged to attend this first meeting.

### **Plans to Reimburse Candidates' Expenses**

Before the call committee begins to interview candidates, the council determines what procedures will be used to reimburse candidates' expenses. The congregation is responsible for reasonable travel, lodging and meal costs for candidates who come to interview with the call committee and, later, for the final candidate (and family) to meet the congregation. At the same time, names of all candidates are to remain strictly confidential within the call committee. Only the candidate recommended to the council shall become known beyond the call committee.

### **Approves the Ministry Site Profile**

When the call committee has completed the Ministry Site Profile, the council reviews and formally approves it before the call committee submits it to the synod office.

If there are any questions concerning the above steps, the council president should not hesitate to contact the bishop's representative.

## **STEP TWO: SELECTION--The Call Committee**

### **Surrounds Their Work With Prayer and Scripture**

Every member of the call committee is to have a commitment to prayer and scripture study together as essential components of the call process. Ideas for **devotions** are provided.

### **Reviews This Call Process Handbook**

Call committee members should be familiar with the steps of the call process as described in this handbook. Before beginning any of the steps, the committee and council will have an orientation session with the Call Process Minister.

### **Meets with the Call Process Minister for Orientation**

The call committee and council meet with the Call Process Minister for an orientation to:

- discuss in detail the committee's role in the call process
- agree on common understandings of confidentiality
- understand the importance of communication with synod council, congregation, and candidates.

### **Communicates Regularly with Council and Congregation**

It is important for the call committee to communicate regularly with the council and congregation. That communication builds trust in the committee's work and affects the way its recommended candidate is received. To this end, the following pattern is recommended:

- The call committee chairperson reports to each council meeting what the committee is doing and brings any concerns back to the call committee.
- The committee reports its progress in each congregational newsletter and makes special announcements before worship services. One of the first items of publicity will be to solicit names of candidates from congregation members. [See *Where Do We Find Potential Candidates for the Congregation?* below.]
- The committee arranges a visual display of its process and progress for the whole congregation to see. A sample **visual aid** is provided.
- The call committee chairperson is in regular email/phone contact with the Call Process Minister.

## Completes the Ministry Site Profile

The first task of the call committee is to complete the **Ministry Site Profile**. The form is completed online, and can be located at [www.elca.org/call](http://www.elca.org/call). Stay to the left side of the page and click on Call Process Forms. As that profile is completed, we expect that call committees will also complete at least questions 1 and 3 of the **optional questions**. Formatta Filler is required to complete this form, and may be downloaded free at <http://archive.elca.org/help.html>. When the call is to a multiple point parish, one Ministry Site Profile is completed for the parish, while attachments may describe the various congregations. Care is to be given defining the expectations of the leader's time in serving a multiple point parish. The Call Process Minister reviews it and gives counsel as to how the document might be improved to make it more attractive to a potential candidate. When the Profile is complete, it is approved by the council and becomes a part of the parish records. This Profile informs potential candidates about the congregation and how it is engaged in God's work.

It is often important for the call committee to involve the congregation in the process by soliciting ideas. A **sample survey** regarding ministry priorities and a **survey for congregational demographics** are attached.

When the Profile has been approved by the council, it is sent to the synod office.

## Prepares to Interview Candidates

After sending the Mission Site Profile, the call committee begins to prepare to interview candidates. Among the items the committee should consider are:

- Do we have a clear understanding of how the congregation will reimburse candidates for expenses?
- What additional information, in addition to the Profile, do we want to send to each candidate? (E.g. a short biography of each call committee member, the latest annual congregational report, samples of newsletters and Sunday bulletins, information about the area and community in which the members live, and, where no parsonage is provided, information from realtors about housing costs and availability.)
- What additional materials would we like from the pastor? (e.g. a sermon recording, examples of bulletins, newsletters and annual reports.)
- What questions do we want to ask each candidate? **Questions** to consider are provided. The council and congregation members may have ideas to contribute.
- What questions might candidates ask us? Because first interviews are a learning experience for everyone involved, some call committees find it helpful to do a mock interview with a retired or interim pastor.
- How shall we provide hospitality to the candidates? Provisions are made for **reimbursing the candidate** for interview expenses.

## Where Do We Find Potential Candidates for the Ministry?

After the Council has approved the *Profile* and it has been submitted, the Office of the Bishop is gathering the names of possible candidates. These come from three sources: pastors/rostered leaders within the synod; candidates from outside the synod; candidates whose names are submitted by the congregation.

- Pastors/Rostered Leaders within the synod. The bishop and staff identify potential candidates or those candidates indicate their interest in the ministry. Sometimes leaders in the synod will recommend others.
- Candidates from other synods. These are candidates who submit a Rostered Leader's Profile indicating interest in the Central States Synod. If the candidate's present bishop indicates any reservations, these are investigated by the bishop's representative. Sometimes the bishop's staff has personal knowledge of appropriate candidates who are invited to consider the call.
- Candidates suggested by the congregation. The call committee invites congregation members to submit names. It is important when members submit these names to the call committee that they understand 1) that these names may NOT be considered under certain circumstances (e.g. if there are serious ethical problems) 2) that they should refrain from being in contact with the pastor once the name is submitted. A **referral form** and **sample cover letter** are provided. The bishop's representative contacts the appropriate synod office for a recommendation before inviting the rostered leader to consider the call.
- Beginning in spring 2009, all rostered leaders will be able to learn about your pastoral vacancy by going online to an ELCA Ministry Opportunities webpage where they will read your 75 word description. That webpage reaches far more potential pastors and rostered leaders than postcards or letters sent by the congregation. After reading your description, they may request your full Profile from the synod office.

## Receives and Studies Candidates' Materials

The names submitted by the Office of the Bishop will have had a broad screening: they will have a positive recommendation from the appropriate synod office unless otherwise indicated; there will be a broad agreement between the congregation's compensation offer and the leader's needs; the candidates will have expressed a positive interest in the call based on the Ministry Site Profile. However, candidates may be involved in the call process with other congregations. Only when a call committee recommends a candidate to the council is the leader expected to withdraw from all other processes.

The bishop's representative will submit names to the call committee as they become available. Forms will be sent electronically. He or she will keep the call committee chairperson informed as to the availability of names. Sometimes a call committee will have to decide whether to interview another candidate or not. Considering another person often adds a month to the interviewing process and the committee risks losing a worthy candidate already interviewed.

All call committee members should receive complete copies of the candidate's materials in order to prepare a final list of questions for the interview process.

*NOTE: If there is an agreement between the Office of the Bishop and the call committee that the congregation is appropriate for a first-call candidate, the bishop will usually recommend no other*

*candidates until the committee has made a decision about the graduate. This is a matter of fairness to a person who has had no previous call to ordained ministry. If the call committee decides not to continue the process with this person, he or she will be released to consider other call opportunities and the committee will receive other names.*

### **Maintains Strict Confidentiality**

The call committee keeps the names and resumes of all candidates in the strictest confidence throughout the committee's work. The reason for maintaining confidentiality is respect of the other parties involved in the process: the potential rostered leader and her/his present congregation. Candidates are often open to considering other calls as a way of discerning God's will for them. However, a congregation which learns that its leader is open to other possibilities often assumes that the person is indeed going to leave. Often leaders make a decision to stay where they are but further ministry is disrupted by a premature disclosure of their involvement in a call process. **It is only appropriate for the call committee to reveal the name and resume material of the candidate it recommends to the council.** Good candidates have refused further contact with call committees who have not respected their desire for confidentiality.

### **Contacts All Candidates Immediately**

As soon as the call committee receives candidates' materials, the chairperson should contact each candidate by phone to let the candidates know: 1) that the committee has her or his materials; 2) an idea regarding when the candidate can anticipate further contact; 3) the committee's request for additional material from the candidate; and 4) the additional materials which he/she can expect from the committee.

It is wise to contact candidates every two or weeks throughout the process. Otherwise they may conclude that the call committee isn't interested in them and turn to other possibilities.

### **Schedules and Conducts Interviews**

All candidates expect to have significant contact with the call committee. If the call committee is unwilling to commit to this, it must inform the bishop's representative so that potential candidates can be informed. (This will reduce the pool of available candidates.) If the committee finds a candidate's materials problematic, the chairperson should contact the Call Process Minister to discuss the issue.

The call committee interviews candidates as their materials are submitted. Face to face interviews are best, of course. However, if the costs are prohibitive for the congregation, the committee may do screening interviews by conference call in order to decide which candidate(s) to bring for an on-site visit and interview. These should be very carefully structured to indicate hospitality to the candidate in a very artificial situation. It is best if the candidate has a biography of each call committee member, and the general questions that will be asked.

On-site interviews usually include a general introduction to the community, supper (hosted by a couple of call committee members), and a three hour evening interview. Indications of thoughtfulness and hospitality make a deep impression on candidates.

Call committees sometimes want to visit a final candidate's congregation on a Sunday

morning to experience worship and preaching. Those visits should be conducted with the knowledge and consent of the candidate. Keep in mind that the candidate is currently a worship leader and preacher for a specific congregation and their style may be adapted to fit that situation. What is experienced in another congregation may not be what that leader does in your congregation. Also, although the Sunday morning presence is very important, when calling a pastor, the congregation is calling a spiritual leader who does much more than preach and lead worship. Care is to be given to asking references and asking for examples of the pastor's abilities in all areas of responsibility that are priorities for the congregation.

**The discernment process works best if every member of the call committee has the same experiences of each candidate.**

### **Selects One Candidate and Releases the Others**

The committee releases each candidate as he/she is no longer in consideration. A phone call and a **follow-up letter** of the committee's decision should inform rejected candidates. This is a matter of care and respect. Honest feedback can be very helpful to a candidate.

If the committee is impressed with two or more candidates, it should be honest with those not selected. Tell them that they made a very favorable impression on the committee and ask if they will be willing to be considered if the process with the candidate of choice does not work out. Most candidates are willing to be reconsidered if the call committee is clear about their desirability.

The committee often invites the candidate of choice (and family if applicable) for a second visit. At this time the financial compensation package is agreed upon with the assent of the congregation council. The candidate may want to meet with the staff of the congregation at this time. Sometimes this step is not financially feasible and any issues which might preclude the candidate's agreeing to go further in the process will need to be addressed by phone. Inform the Call Process Minister that the call committee is planning to recommend the candidate to the council.

### **Recommends the Selected Candidate to the Council**

When the call committee has agreed on a candidate, it reports its selection to the council. It provides the council with all the information it has about the candidate, along with the committee's reasons for recommending her or him. Under no circumstances shall the committee reveal the names or resumes of other candidates.

## **STEP THREE: ELECTION—The Council and Congregation**

### **Acts on the Recommendation of the Call Committee**

When the call committee has recommended a candidate, the council votes on recommending the candidate to the congregation. If the decision is positive, the council identifies a tentative date for the candidate (and family, if applicable) to meet the congregation and sets a date for a special congregational meeting in accordance with constitutional provisions.

The president calls the bishop's representative to report the date of the congregational meeting. In response, the Office of the Bishop sends a blank *Letter of Call* document to the president and appoints a representative to the congregational call meeting. This person's sole role will be to observe the meeting.

### **Arranges for the Congregation to Meet the Candidate**

The council president contacts the candidate to negotiate a date for the candidate (and family, if applicable) to meet the congregation. The council

- sets a date for the congregation to meet the candidate
- provides information about the candidate to congregation members
- affirms the date for a special congregational meeting to vote on the call, observing the congregation's constitutional requirements for such a meeting

The council and call committee make plans to provide hospitality to the candidate and his/her family during the visit. It is recommended that the candidate be introduced at an informal congregational gathering, such as an afternoon coffee or evening dessert event. It is appropriate to ask the candidate to lead a Bible study or devotion during the event, giving the congregation an opportunity to observe the candidate's public presence. Sometimes a brief question-answer session is desirable. Often the council will meet with the candidate to get to know him/her, to affirm the final compensation proposal, and to discuss a potential starting date for ministry. The format for this visit is very flexible and anything mutually agreed upon by candidate and council is fine.

### **Prepares for the Congregational Meeting**

The council prepares and moves two resolutions for the congregation to consider. The congregation should receive materials about the candidate well before the meeting.

When the call is to a parish, each congregation of the parish arranges for its own meeting. Resolution One must be approved by a two-thirds majority in each congregation.

*RESOLUTION ONE: "Shall \_\_\_\_\_, of \_\_\_\_\_, be called to serve as pastor/associate in ministry/diaconal minister/deaconess of \_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church?"*

Voting on this resolution is by written ballot and requires a two-thirds majority for approval.

*RESOLUTION TWO: "Shall the initial annual compensation of the leader be: [an itemized list of compensation]?"*

Voting on this resolution may be by voice vote and requires a simple majority for approval.

If the first resolution fails to be approved, the congregation president contacts the bishop's office for consultation about next steps. The president informs the candidate of the vote by telephone.

### **Completes and Sends Letter of Call to the Bishop**

When the congregation approves both resolutions, the president and council secretary complete the *Letter of Call* and the Definition of Compensation documents and send them to the bishop for review and attestation. The bishop then sends the *Letter of Call* and the Definition of Compensation to the candidate, who has up to thirty (30) days to respond in writing to the congregation's call. Usually a candidate, who has allowed his /her name to be presented to a congregation, is prepared to accept the call immediately. The exception may occur with a close congregational vote.

When the candidate has received the *Letter of Call* from the Office of the Bishop, she/he sends a written acceptance of the call to the congregation with copy to the synod office.

## **STEP FOUR: STARTUP—The Congregation Council**

### **Notifies Congregation and Bishop of Candidate's Response**

When the council receives the candidate's written response, the president notifies the congregation and the bishop of the candidate's decision. If the call has been declined, the process begins again at Step Two (more candidates are recommended to the call committee). This is a very rare occurrence if the process has been properly observed.

### **Plans for the Leader's Move and Installation**

When the call has been accepted, the council begins to plan hospitality for the new leader (and family) and to work with him or her to arrange for moving the household. The congregation is responsible to pay usual costs for the move. The council also works with the new leader, in consultation with the bishop, to plan a date for a service of installation as early in the leader's tenure as possible.

### **Acknowledges the Transitional Ministry**

It is recommended that the council lead the congregation in planning a closure service and other appropriate acknowledgement and thank you to those who have offered ministry support during the pastoral transition. Such acknowledgement should be complete before the new leader arrives to begin ministry.

### **Establishes a Mutual Ministry Committee**

Soon after the new rostered leader begins ministry, the council and pastor establish a mutual ministry (or staff support) committee (ELCA Model Constitution, C13.04) **Guidelines** are provided.



EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
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**Certification of Completion of Financial Records**

Upon the resignation of a pastor, the following policy of the Central States Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America applies:

“The pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former congregation before:

- ❑ *installation in other field of labor, or*
- ❑ *the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.” (S14.16) and “The congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. (C9.08)*

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

**This is to certify:**

1. **That 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.**

2. **That satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations have been made by the Reverend \_\_\_\_\_**

\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

**Lutheran Church, located in \_\_\_\_\_.**

**Signed:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Treasurer of the Congregation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Pastor**

***In most cases, this form should be completed within a month of the pastor leaving.***

Please return to the:

**Central States Synod, ELCA  
21 N. 12<sup>th</sup> St., Suite 210  
Kansas City, KS 66102**

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
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**EXIT CONVERSATION WITH THE ROSTERED LEADER**

Information gathered from a departing rostered leader can help the congregation understand itself better, and can provide guidance for those involved in the transition. The conversation can also help the departing leader close his/her ministry with you and prepare for the future. The records of the conversation belong to the church council.

Suggested questions for your conversation:

1. What would you consider your most important contributions to this congregation?
2. Were there things you had hoped to do but were not able to accomplish?
3. What will you miss most about this ministry and this place?
4. What are you not going to miss?
5. What were the things in this ministry that seemed to refresh your spirit?
6. What in this ministry took the heaviest toll on your body and spirit?
7. Name five people on whose lives you feel you have made a significant impact.
8. Describe at least two critical points in the life of the congregation where you feel you made the right decision and took the risk of convincing this congregation to follow you.
9. Can you think of a point where you made the wrong decision and wish you had decided differently?
10. How did the congregation bless you (and your family)?
11. How was the congregation hard on you (and your family)?
12. As you think of the future of this congregation, what would you say is its unrealized potential?
13. What will be some of the challenges for your successor?
14. Have you made a list of things you have normally taken care of that someone will have to be responsible for during the transition? If not, how and when will you make it?
15. Is there anything you would like to add?

***Thank you for your ministry with and among us.***

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
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**Pastoral Ethics: Pastors Relating to Previously Served Parishes**

When a pastor accepts a call to a congregation, a sacred covenant is established between that pastor and the people of God in that place. In order that the ministry might be strong and effective, it is important for that relationship to be strengthened and nurtured until God calls that pastor to another sector of ministry. When a pastor resigns, that call – that covenant – ends. How does a pastor relate appropriately to members of congregations where one has previously served? We offer the following suggestions, with the hope that it will give guidance so that good choices are made which do not negatively impact the ministry of the people of God.

1. It is your responsibility as a former pastor to decline invitations to conduct pastoral acts in any former parish. It is important that you do not pass the burden of such decisions back to the pastor who currently holds that call. As professional people, we commit ourselves to act responsibly in these matters. For the sake of the church and the ongoing ministry of the congregation, “Do to others as you would have them do to you.” When we do that, our relating to members of previous parishes can be used by God to build up the body of Christ.
2. It is your responsibility as a former pastor to be supportive of your successor, even when that is difficult to do. The responsibility for the success of the current pastor is also your responsibility. If it is not possible for you to be supportive of that pastor’s ministry, it is extremely important that you cut off contact with members of that congregation, in order not to become a hindrance to its ministry.
3. While the above statements are addressed to pastors, spouses of pastors must consider the same factors, and also respect the recommendations made above. Spouses share a pastoral identity and, as a result, can become hindrances as easily as a pastor can.

This policy on pastoral ethics is shared for the sake of the Church and the ongoing ministry of the congregation, to enable us to act wisely in difficult circumstances. It is provided to help rostered leaders and congregations understand S14.14 of the Synod Constitution:

***S14.14 Ordained ministers shall respect the integrity of the ministry of congregations which they do not serve and shall not exercise ministerial functions therein unless invited to do so by the pastor, or if there is no duly called pastor, then by the interim pastor in consultation with the Congregation Council.***

*Adopted by the Central States Synod Council Executive Committee  
August, 2005*

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
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**Pastoral Ethics: For Pastors Retiring to a Community Where They Have Served**

When a pastor accepts a call to a congregation, a sacred covenant is established between that pastor and the people of God. In order that the ministry might be strong and effective, it is important for that relationship to be strengthened and nurtured until God calls that pastor to another sector of ministry. When a pastor retires, it is often desired to remain with a community where there has been life and family investment. We offer the following observations and suggestions with the hope that it will give guidance to pastors who are considering retirement, so that good decisions are made which do not negatively impact the ministry of the people of God.

1. Whenever possible, plan your retirement so that you will not be retiring in the parish where you have served as pastor.
2. If you are seriously considering remaining in the same community, please consult with the Bishop before any firm decisions are made.
3. Consider retirement as a “call to the ministry of the baptized.” Retirement does not mean being uninvolved as an active church member; it means to be involved in ministry as we have encouraged members to be involved throughout our ministries. Belonging to the same congregation that you served as pastor may not allow you to function actively, sharing your many gifts and insights, without creating problems for the congregation, which now has a covenant with a new pastor. Therefore, if there is any other ELCA congregation within commuting distance, transfer.
4. If you decide to live where you have served as a pastor, recognize that you may become the focus of difficulty in that setting. Prepare the congregation well before declaring your new relationship to members of the congregation. Visit in depth with the new pastor who has been called to the parish, so the pastor can be assured that your presence will not be a hindrance, and that you will do everything possible to be of support and help. Ongoing communication within the pastorate is absolutely essential. “Do to others as you would want them to do to you” is the guiding principle.”
5. It is your responsibility, as a former pastor, to **decline invitations to conduct pastoral acts in any former parish**. It is important that you say “no,” rather than, “I’ll come if the current pastor says okay.”
6. While the above statements are addressed to pastors, **spouses of pastors** must consider the same factors, and also respect the above recommendations. Spouses share a pastoral identity and, as a result, can become hindrances as easily as a pastor can.
7. It is your responsibility as a former pastor to be supportive of your successor, even when that is difficult to do. If it is not possible to be supportive of the pastor’s ministry, it is extremely important that you remove yourself from that congregation, in order to not become a hindrance to its ministry.

This policy on pastoral ethics is shared for the sake of the Church and the ongoing ministry of the congregation, to enable us to act wisely in difficult circumstances. It is provided to help rostered leaders and congregations understand S14.14 of the Synod Constitution:

***S14.14 Ordained ministers shall respect the integrity of the ministry of congregations which they do not serve and shall not exercise ministerial functions therein unless invited to do so by the pastor, or if there is no duly called pastor, then by the interim pastor in consultation with the Congregation Council.***

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**August, 2005**

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**Rationale for Interim Pastor NOT Becoming a Candidate for Call**

A question is often raised by a congregation and/or a call committee in words such as: “Why is it not a good idea for a congregation to consider calling its interim pastor to be the next permanent/settled pastor for our congregation?”

From the experience of those who have served as interim pastors and those who have studied the issues involved in interim ministry, the following reasons provide the answer:

A. Interim ministry is unique. There are specific tasks to accomplish during the interim that work at rebuilding. An interim pastor often leads in ways that are acceptable during an interim period, but may not be as acceptable to some in the congregation were s/he to remain as settled pastor. In fact, interim pastors are appointed for the specific needs of the congregation during transition, and those needs are not necessarily the same when the congregation is ready for a settled pastor.

B. Because the interim pastor has more visibility and has developed relationships in the congregation, an interim pastor has an advantage in access over other possible pastoral candidates who may be more appropriate for the call.

C. An interim pastor will always have a following, but will often have those who are not favorably committed to him or her. If the interim pastor were called, there would be built-in opposition from the beginning.

D. If the decision is made to consider the interim pastor along with other pastoral candidates, and the interim pastor is not recommended for the call, there could easily be hurt feelings that could jeopardize either the remainder of the interim work, or the start-up of the settled pastor.

E. The congregation itself may pass up better leadership for that stage of its life if it fails to consider a larger number of candidates who have gifts to bring.

Therefore, the Covenant for Interim Ministry expressly states that the interim pastor will not make him/herself available for call, and that the congregation agrees not to attempt to call the interim pastor. When the interim pastor is introduced to the congregation, it should be made clear that the work of an interim pastor is distinctly different from that of a settled pastor, and the interim pastor is not available for call in that place. Since members may naturally form an attachment to the interim pastor, it is often necessary for both the pastor and congregational leaders to remind members that issuing a call to the interim pastor is not permitted under the interim ministry covenant.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CENTRAL STATES SYNOD



**Position Description**

Congregation/Ministry to be served: *(for more than one, please list all)*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation ID code (5 digits) \_\_\_\_\_

Roster status required: *(check one)*

\_\_\_\_\_ Ordained Pastor      \_\_\_\_\_ Associate in Ministry  
\_\_\_\_\_ Diaconal Minister      \_\_\_\_\_ Deaconess

Will the person called be the only rostered person serving the congregation/ministry?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes  
\_\_\_\_\_ No, the position is one of the following:  
\_\_\_\_\_ Senior Pastor      \_\_\_\_\_ Associate / Assistant Pastor  
\_\_\_\_\_ Associate in Ministry      \_\_\_\_\_ Diaconal Minister  
\_\_\_\_\_ Deaconess

*(If this is a multiple staff situation):* For what particular tasks or areas of the congregation's life will the person called or appointed be responsible? Please attach job description.

Is the position full-time? If no, what percentage of full-time?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes  
\_\_\_\_\_ No – Percentage of full-time: \_\_\_\_\_ percent

Is this a new or existing position?

\_\_\_\_\_ New position  
\_\_\_\_\_ Existing position

What is the length of term of this position or call?

\_\_\_\_\_ Continuous (without limitation)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Co-terminus with the senior pastor  
\_\_\_\_\_ Fixed term, for a period of \_\_\_\_\_ years *(needs the Bishop's prior approval)*

Does the ministry require skills in any language other than English?

\_\_\_\_\_ No  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes – Which language(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

**Compensation and Professional Expense Reimbursement**

Range of base salary: \$\_\_\_\_\_ Range of base salary including housing allowance: \$\_\_\_\_\_

In addition to base salary, we provide: *(please check those that would apply)*

Parsonage

Housing equity allowance: \$\_\_\_\_\_ *(if applicable)*

Social Security offset

Continuing education of 14 days & ELCA recommended minimum allowance of \$\_\_\_\_\_

Four weeks vacation, including four Sundays

Car or Mileage allowance

Health and pension through ELCA Board of Pensions

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Information for Council President**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone – Day \_\_\_\_\_ Evening \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Information for Call Committee Chairperson**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone – Day \_\_\_\_\_ Evening \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Council President or Vice-President Date

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Council Secretary Date

*Return to: Central States Synod, 21 N. 12<sup>th</sup> St., Ste. 210, Kansas City, KS 64102*  
[jkibler@css-elca.org](mailto:jkibler@css-elca.org); fax 913.948.9707

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CENTRAL STATES SYNOD**



**Suggestions for Selecting a Call Committee**

In selecting a Call Committee, the council consults the congregation constitution for special provisions regarding the call committee's composition and appointment. If no special provisions exist, the following guidelines may prove helpful:

- The model constitution for congregations (C13.05) recommends that the Council appoint a Call Committee of six members whose term of office ends upon the installation of the newly-called pastor/lay rostered leader. The more members on the Committee, the longer the process will take. Every member is expected to be at EVERY meeting of the Committee.
- The council invites congregation members (both verbally in written communications) to nominate persons for the Call Committee. Members are free to nominate themselves. The Council needs to be clear that every person nominated will not be asked to serve.
- The Council determines some general criteria for the composition of the Call Committee. Members should demonstrate Christian maturity, and be concerned for the welfare of the whole congregation, rather than their own personal preferences. Members should work well with others. There should be a diversity in age, gender, and length of membership in the congregation; the same qualifications that are needed for Council service such as voting member, regular worship attendee, regular giver, and participant in congregational ministry.
- *In congregations that have a strong vision for mission and a ministry plan that will be the foundation for the new leader's ministry, an additional step is desirable. Invite those who are interested in serving on the Call Committee for a gathering. Ask them to briefly introduce themselves, to indicate why they are interested in serving on the Call Committee, and about their commitment to God's mission and the ways it is being followed in the congregation. Only members who attend this gathering will be eligible to serve on the Call Committee. A Council Member records the information for the council deliberations.*
- The Council selects the Call Committee from all nominations (including those made by Council members), on the basis of its criteria. It informs the Call Committee members of their selection and thanks all who have offered their services.
- The Call Committee appoints the Chairperson of the Call Committee. Gifts needed for this ministry are spiritual maturity, organizational ability, conscientiousness, and a sense of partnership with the Council. The chairperson is responsible for regular communication with the congregation council. Because documents will be sent electronically from the Office of the Bishop and the Call Process Minister, it is important that the Chairperson or others have access to email.

The Council directs the Chairperson of the Call Committee to contact the Office of the Bishop in order to advance the call process.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CENTRAL STATES SYNOD



Devotion Ideas for Call Committees

Living under the banner of **Changed by love Sent in love To Serve** the congregations and ministries that compose the Central States Synod have adopted four missional directions for our life together:

- Igniting spiritual renewal;
- Raising up leaders of all ages for the church;
- Building bridges across the differences that divide our society;
- Inspiring and equipping people to be a part of what God is up to in their everyday lives.

Part of the joy of life in the Central States Synod is that we live in such diverse communities. A call to God's work in your setting will look different from a call to another ministry in the same synod. What do those statements mean in your context? Where is spiritual renewal taking place in your ministry? How are you raising up leaders for the church? What differences exist in your community? How do you help people to see and talk about God in their daily lives?

As you prepare to call a new spiritual leader for your ministry, how do those directions apply to the priorities you have for your leader? Which statements most closely fit what the congregation is currently doing? Which statements most closely fit your hopes for the future? What gifts do you need in your next leader to help you work toward those directions?

Read Romans 12:1-8. Give thanks to God for the variety of gifts placed in your congregation, and pray for wisdom to put those gifts to use in God's mission beyond the congregation. Pray for those you will meet in the call process, that they will see the ways they can help you live out your calling to ignite spiritual renewal, raise up leaders, build bridges, and equip others to see what God is doing in their daily lives.

Consider the great call stories in scripture. Have each committee member choose a favorite Bible story of God calling someone to ministry: Moses, Abraham, Samuel, David, Jeremiah, Mary, Paul, Peter, Andrew, Lydia, etc. Each meeting, have a different member take a turn telling why they chose that story, and how the story informs their own life. Look for the surprises in those call stories as God did amazing works through ordinary people.

Print out the text or provide Bibles so that everyone has a copy of the gospel for the coming Sunday. After reading through it, allow 5 minutes of silence while individuals silently consider the questions, "What is God doing in this text?" and "What is God saying to me in this text?" Spend 15 minutes sharing reflections. Close in prayer for each other, for God's work among you, and for the candidates who will be considering a call to ministry with you.

Other texts to read and let feed you in the same manner include Ephesians 4:1-13, Luke 10:1-12, Philippians 4:4-9, I Corinthians 12:14-27

**7**  
A congregational meeting will be held to vote on one candidate

**8**  
We have called \_\_\_\_\_  
as our pastor

**1**  
We have contacted the Office of the Bishop

**2**  
We have the services of an Interim Pastor

**3**  
A Call Committee has been appointed

**4**  
We are now working on our Ministry Site Profile

**5**  
The Call Committee is interviewing candidates provided by the Office of the Bishop

**6**  
One candidate will be nominated by the Congregation Council

*“You shall be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8)*

**9**  
The pastor-elect will respond within thirty days

**10**  
A service of installation will be held



**Central States Synod,  
ELCA**

21 N. 12<sup>th</sup> St., Ste. 210  
Kansas City, KS 66102  
913.948.9701  
Fax 913.948.9707

**Our  
Progress  
Toward  
Calling  
A PASTOR**



**3. DEMOGRAPHICS**

In the congregation / organization

In the surrounding community

**Languages spoken**

Primary language:

Second language:

Third language:

**Ethnicity**

Largest   %

Second   %

Third   %

Fourth   %

%

%

%

%

**Gender comparison \***

%  %

Male Female

**Age distribution \***

%  %  %  %  %

19 years or younger 20 -34 35 - 49 50 - 64 over 65

**Number of Paid Staff** ( Number of full or part time paid staff of the congregation or organization. )

Clergy		Secretarial Support	
Lay Rostered		Custodial Support	
Other Lay Professionals		Other	

**Enter the following congregational information.**

Average weekly worship attendance	<input type="text"/>
Average Sunday School attendance	<input type="text"/>
Parish type:	<input type="text"/>

Indicate the distance members live from the church facilities

1/2 mile or less	<input type="text"/> %	1 - 3 miles	<input type="text"/> %
1/2 - 1 mile	<input type="text"/> %	More than 3 miles	<input type="text"/> %

**4. BUDGET OF THE CONGREGATION / ORGANIZATION**

For the fiscal year :

Total budget for the last fiscal year		Total debt of the congregation/ organization at the end of the last fiscal year	
Total 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**

*Please give a short answer to the following questions. ( approx. 150 words maximum )*

**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 ( available at [www.elca.org/research](http://www.elca.org/research) ) 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. ( If this profile is about a congregation, the Congregational Trend Report ( available at [www.elca.org/research](http://www.elca.org/research) ) may be helpful to you.)

**Programs**

Describe your congregation 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 you think of your congregation or organization and the way it tends to live out its corporate life and pursue its mission, what tends to characterize your life together? You may make only one selection in each of the comparisons below or you may leave the line blank if this item does not apply to your ministry site.

#### AS A COMMUNITY

	A LOT LIKE US	A LITTLE LIKE US	A LITTLE LIKE US	A LOT 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

	A LOT LIKE US	A LITTLE LIKE US	A LITTLE LIKE US	A LOT LIKE US	
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 direction.	<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

	A LOT LIKE US	A LITTLE LIKE US	A LITTLE LIKE US	A LOT LIKE US	
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

	A LOT LIKE US	A LITTLE LIKE US	A LITTLE LIKE US	A LOT LIKE US	
We are obviously Lutheran in identity 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**

*The mission of a congregation or organization is found at the intersection of its purpose, giftedness and context. That is, a clear sense of mission will grow directly out of an assessment of your identity and purpose, your resources and gifts, and your understanding of the needs and trends within your community. Please offer thoughtful responses to the following questions. ( Approximately 250 words maximum )*

### **Purpose**

How does this congregation or organization understand its reason for being in light of God's call to mission and service? Who are you and why are you here? ( You may wish to refer to your congregation's or organization's Mission or Vision statements. )

### **Giftedness**

What are your gifts and resources for fulfilling this purpose? What are the congregation's or organization's 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**

*In addition to your synodical bishop, please list four people who know your congregation or organization well and who would be willing to share their perspective on the life and ministry of the congregation or organization. One reference should be a person who is currently a member or employee/client; one reference should be someone from the community who is able to regularly observe your ministry; and one should be an ordained ELCA clergyperson.*

Synodical Bishop

Name:

Synod

Day Phone: ( ) -  Evening Phone: ( ) -  Cell: ( ) -  FAX: ( ) -

e-mail:

Someone from inside the congregation or organization

Name:

Organization and Title

Day Phone: ( ) -  Evening Phone: ( ) -  Cell: ( ) -  FAX: ( ) -

e-mail:

Someone from outside the congregation or organization

Name:

Organization and Title

Day Phone: ( ) -  Evening Phone: ( ) -  Cell: ( ) -  FAX: ( ) -

e-mail:

A member of the ELCA clergy roster

Name:

Organization and Title

Day Phone: ( ) -  Evening Phone: ( ) -  Cell: ( ) -  FAX: ( ) -

e-mail:

Anyone else who knows your setting well

Name:

Organization and Title

Day Phone: ( ) -  Evening Phone: ( ) -  Cell: ( ) -  FAX: ( ) -

e-mail:

### **PART III: LEADERSHIP NEEDS**

Use this section to describe both the gifts for ministry and the style of leadership that your position requires.

#### **10. THE LEADER WE SEEK**

Roster type: ( Check all whom you would be open to interviewing )

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

Position type: ( Select the most descriptive option )

This ministry position is:

Education: ( Select the minimum level of education required )

Language ( proficiencies preferred )

Primary language:  Proficiency

Second language:  Proficiency

Third language:  Proficiency

Experience: ( Select all you would consider for this position )

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

#### **11. TOP FIVE MINISTRY TASKS** ( Select the five most critical tasks required in this position. )

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

## 12. GIFTS FOR MINISTRY

Every rostered leader can offer a variety of gifts, skills and personality characteristics that would be helpful in a ministry setting. Identify a maximum of five gifts for ministry that the rostered leader must bring to your ministry setting in the left-hand column. In the right-hand column, identify five more gifts that would be helpful in your ministry setting. ( If your setting is a congregation and your search is for a pastor, this survey of gifts assumes that the pastor is able to offer worship leadership and preaching. )

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

### 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 site:

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

Please list 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

Indicate the maximum amount that is available for the "Defined Compensation" of this ministry position. 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.

You may choose to use the button below to access the ELCA Board of Pensions Defined Compensation calculator in assisting you to determine Defined Compensation.

- Defined Compensation  *The maximum amount available for Defined Compensation*
- Parsonage  Yes  No
- Social Security Tax offset  Yes  No

### 15. BENEFITS

The ELCA Board of Pensions has complete information about the benefits program of the church at [www.elcabop.org](http://www.elcabop.org) including online calculators to help you estimate costs.

- Pension  Yes  No
- Medical  Yes  No
- Vacation weeks:

*( Recommended: Four weeks per year. For an ordained or lay rostered minister in a congregation, this should include four Sundays. )*

Sabbatical Policy                       Yes  No

Parental Leave Policy                 Yes  No

Background Check Policy             Yes  No    *( Recommended for all paid staff and key volunteers. )*

Mutual Ministry Committee         Yes  No

**16. PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES**

Auto / travel reimbursement         Yes  No

*( Recommended: Auto reimbursement at the IRS business mileage for actual miles driven. )*

Professional Expense account       Yes  No

*( A reimbursement account for professional expenses - books, publications, memberships, vestments, uniforms and the like. )*

Continuing Education                 Yes  No

*( Recommended: Two weeks per year, plus \$700 per year from the congregation or organization and \$300 per year from the rostered leader; funds to be held in a separate account. )*

First Call Theological Education     Yes  No

*( Required of all rostered leaders entering their first call of service. )*

**Comments**

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

**PART IV: COMMENTARY**

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

**Are you able to supply the following items, if requested?**

- Mission and Vision statement of the congregation or organization       Yes    No
- Printed history of the congregation or organization                       Yes    No
- Strategic Plan: Goals and Objectives                                          Yes    No
- Budget      Yes    No
- Annual Report      Yes    No
- Position description: Duties and Responsibilities                              Yes    No
- Communications Piece ( publicity, newsletter, etc. )                        Yes    No

**17. SEVEN REFLECTIONS**

**Seven Reflections on Ministry and Context**

If you would like to enhance your Ministry Site Profile with additional reflections on several key questions, you may download the extra form by clicking the button at the right.

The form is optional.

**PART V: COMPLETION OF PROFILE**

**18. 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 )

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

//

**19. SYNOD CONTACT PERSON**

Please list the name of the person on the synod staff who is the contact person or call process administrator for your call process. You may need to contact the synod office to verify this information.

Name:

Title

e-mail:

Office Phone:

**20. REFERENCE'S RECOMMENDATION**

Please identify one of the references whom you named above who is from outside the congregation or organization and who is willing to comment on the life and ministry of this ministry site. The reference will be asked to complete the *Ministry Site Characteristics* questionnaire and offer reflections.

Reference agreeing to do this:

Name:

Day Phone:

Evening Phone

Cell:

FAX:

e-mail:

***Thank you for the thoughtfulness and energy you have invested in completing this form.  
God bless your search for new leadership!***

//

Submit Date

Approved

Not Approved

//

Synod Approval Date



# SEVEN REFLECTIONS ON MINISTRY AND CONTEXT

---

## MINISTRY SITE PROFILE

Date Completed:

//

Date Posted:

//

*This questionnaire is optional unless specifically required by your synod's call process administrator(s). Once complete, it will be attached to your Ministry Site Profile. You may choose as many of the following questions as you wish, with four of the seven as a suggested number of responses. Give short, reflective answers. ( Approximate length is 200 words. Space is limited to the size of the box and fields do not expand. )*

### NAME AND LOCATION

CONGREGATION    AGENCY, INSTITUTION or ORGANIZATION

--	--	--

Name

			<input checked="" type="radio"/> U.S. <input type="radio"/> Canada
--	--	--	--

City

State / Province

ZIP / Postal Code

Country

1. What key issues or concerns of our church and society are reflected in the ministry that is centered in your congregation or organization?

--

2. How do the stewardship practices and allocation of financial resources of the congregation or organization reflect your priorities for mission?

--

3. In what ways is the membership of your congregation or organization similar or different from the people of the neighborhood in which you are located?

4. Identify the three most significant or formative events in the history of your congregation or organization.

5. Describe the way the congregation or organization is currently involved in community and ecumenical partnerships.

6. Has your congregation or organization had significant conflict in recent history and, if so, what have you learned from that experience?

7. Describe your physical facilities: construction date, purpose, capacity, date of last renovation, any deferred maintenance, and any plans for upgrading.

/ /

Submit Date

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CENTRAL STATES SYNOD**

Sample Congregational Survey When Calling a New Rostered Leader

*Every rostered leader offers a variety of gifts, skills and personality characteristics that would be helpful in a ministry setting. In the left column, identify a maximum of five gifts for ministry that the leader must bring to your setting. In the right column, identify five more gifts that would be helpful in your setting. (If your setting is a congregation and your search is for a pastor, this survey of gifts assumes that the pastor is able to offer worship leadership and preaching.)*

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

What other considerations do you think are important for the Call Committee as it enters this process?

Will you commit to daily prayer for the Call Committee that it might discern the right candidate to further God's mission through our congregation?

Name:

## WHO ARE WE THIS SUNDAY?

Please answer the following questions and return your form as directed. It will take a minute or two. Please help children with their forms or fill out the forms on their behalf. Your call committee is providing this information on your congregation's needs. The purpose of this form is to give your leaders and potential candidates a snapshot of the people present in church today.

1. Mark *one* box to indicate your gender and age group.

	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>
4 years or younger		
5 to 9 years		
10 to 14 years		
15 to 19 years		
20 to 24 years		
25 to 34 years		
35 to 44 years		
45 to 54 years		
55 to 64 years		
65 to 74 years		
75 to 84 years		
85 years or older		

2. Are you... (*circle one*)  
 Caucasian/ Black/ Asian or Pacific Islander/ American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut  
 Another race: which? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Are you of Spanish/Hispanic origin?      Yes    No
4. What language do you usually speak at home?  
 English      Spanish      Another language: which? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How long does it usually take you to get from your home to the church? \_\_\_\_\_ minutes
6. How long have you been a member of this congregation?  
 Less than 1 year      1- 3 years      4- 10 years      More than 10 years      Not a member
7. On the average, how often are you at the church building other than for weekend worship?  
 Once a week or more/ 2 or 3 times a month/ About once a month/ Less than once a month
8. Of the people (including children) here today, how many are related to you (by marriage or blood)? How many people, not including relatives, would you consider close friends?  
 (*Please enter "0" if none.*)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ people here today are related to me  
 \_\_\_\_\_ people here today are close friends of mine

Thank you for providing this information about yourself. You are invited to share your concerns and ideas with your call committee, or with your congregational council.

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CENTRAL STATES SYNOD**



**SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

Take the time to get acquainted with the candidate. Have someone from the committee lead in prayer. (You can ask the candidate to close the meeting with prayer.) Introduce yourselves and share your roles in the congregation. Ask the candidate briefly to tell you about him or herself. What brought them to this congregation at this point in time?

**THEOLOGY**

1. Describe God's mission with regard to the Church. What is the role of the rostered leader(s) and the congregation in relation to that mission?
2. (If interviewing a pastor or diaconal minister) Describe your preaching style. What themes do you emphasize in your preaching? What do you see as the purpose of the sermon?
3. What is your view of the Bible and its interpretation?
4. Tell us about the Spirit's work in your life and your call to service.

**MINISTRY**

1. What are your top three skills you bring to us? How have you used those in ministry?
2. What aspect of ministry is most satisfying? What aspect is most dissatisfying?
3. How active are you in relationships beyond the local congregation? How do you view ecumenical involvement?
4. Questions about the following areas of ministry are suggested if they have not come up in previous discussion:

Visitation	Pastoral Care	Stewardship
Financial Management	Social Concerns	Youth
Community Involvement	Education	

**LEADERSHIP STYLE**

1. Describe your leadership style in your current setting.
2. What do you see as the primary role of the Congregational Council? Describe how you work with committees. How do you work with other staff members?

3. Communication is an important part of parish life. Give us examples of ways that you communicate within an organization.
4. What do you see as the role of lay members in the congregation, specifically in relation to the functions of worship, learning, witness, service, and support? What functions belong uniquely to your position?

### **PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL GROWTH**

1. How have you participated in lifelong learning? How have you chosen the areas where you have pursued more growth?
2. Share a recent (or past) experience that challenged your thinking, inspired you, or deepened your understanding of your ministry and/or life? (e.g. a book, lecture, movie, event, program, article, travels, etc.)
3. What are your goals for continued personal and professional growth?

### **LEADER AS PERSON**

1. Describe your basic work orientation. Where and when do you work best? How do you determine priorities in tasks you must do?
2. Describe ways you take care of your physical, emotional and spiritual self. How do you observe Sabbath time?
3. How do you view collegiality with neighboring colleagues? What kind of relationship do you appreciate among other leaders, Lutheran and non-Lutheran?
4. The Ministry Profile has provided some information about financial arrangement. You may wish to explore financially related concerns, such as salary, housing, and equity allowance.

### **SAMPLE QUESTIONS ASKED BY CANDIDATES**

1. What are some of the reasons why you are members of this congregation?
2. Describe how you are engaged in God's mission/work in the local community.
3. What is the community's image of this congregation?
4. Tell me about your mission support.
5. What was the last experiment/risk this congregation tried for the sake of God's kingdom?
6. What was the last book or other study that the leadership read together?

7. What did you accomplish during the interim period? How are you different because of that time?
8. Describe your relationship to the other congregations/ministries in the area, and your relationship to the rest of the synod.
9. Who shares responsibility for the visioning for the ministry?
10. What governing structure does this ministry have?
11. How would you prioritize the functions of this position, both in terms of importance and number of hours? What gets deferred if time runs out?
12. What view does the congregation have about continuing education? Time off? Financial support? Will I be encouraged to attend conferences and Synod Assemblies? Who will pay the expenses?
13. How does the leader's family receive support? Are there expectations of my family?
14. Who prepares the council and congregational meeting agendas? Who chairs meetings?
15. What are the housing opportunities in the neighborhood? What present financial arrangements have been made for the housing?
16. What is the school situation in this area?
17. (In the case of multiple-staff ministries) How do you describe the task definitions, lines of authority, conflict management, and reporting methods for the pastoral staff, council, congregation and committees?
18. What hardships has the congregation experienced? What conflicts have you faced, and what did you learn from them?
19. How many pastors has this parish had in the past twenty years?
20. How is the pastor's leadership viewed by the congregation?
21. What kind of secretarial support will the congregation provide?
22. What do you see as the role of the lay members in fulfilling the purposes of the congregation, specifically in relation to the functions of worship, learning, witness, service and support?
23. How do you see my role in relation to the functions of worship, learning, witness, service, and support? Am I a "doer," "giver of orders," or "enabler"?
24. What arrangements have you made for moving the leader, family, and household goods to this area?

**Rostered Leader Interview  
Expense Voucher**

Travel by car \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ and return,  
Cost of rental car and fuel ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
or \_\_\_\_\_ miles @ \_\_\_\_\_ cents per mile..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Travel by air \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ and return ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Meals..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Housing..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Miscellaneous..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total            \$ \_\_\_\_\_

S/ \_\_\_\_\_  
Interviewee            Address

X/ \_\_\_\_\_  
Call Committee Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CENTRAL STATES SYNOD



**Candidate Referral Form**

Candidate Name \_\_\_\_\_

Current Congregation/Ministry \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about this person?

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you personally know this individual? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes, please summarize why you feel this individual would be a strong candidate for our congregation:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

As far as you know, has this individual expressed an interest in the position at our congregation?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Have you or someone you know had discussions with this individual about the position at our congregation? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes, please summarize the information shared during your discussion. (Optional)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: Once your referral is made, please support the confidentiality and integrity of the call process by allowing the Call Committee and Synod to have exclusive contact with the candidate for any matters related to our congregational call.

## Sample Cover Letter for Referral Form

Dear “*Church Name*” Member,

This Call Committee has recently completed a significant step in the call process – the completion of our Ministry Site Profile. This profile will be used by the Bishop and staff to identify candidates to refer to the Call Committee. More importantly, it is used by the candidates themselves to learn about the mission and ministries at “*Church Name.*” A copy of the profile is available in the church office.

Along with information on “*Church Name,*” the profile includes a description of our expectations for a Pastor/lay rostered leader. This description was prepared based on the information received from congregational surveys and input from the council and staff. Enclosed you will find a copy of the description of our expectations for the position.

With these expectations in mind, we are giving you the opportunity to submit names of any ELCA pastors/rostered leaders whom you feel should be contacted by the Bishop and the Call Committee regarding our congregation. Please use the enclosed Candidate Referral form to give us your recommendation. To preserve confidentiality, please mail the form to:

Candidate Referral  
Call Committee Chairperson  
Address

Once your referral is made, please support the confidentiality and integrity of the call process by allowing the Call Committee and Synod to have exclusive contact with the candidate for any matters related to our congregational call. Thank you for your continued support and prayers for the Call Committee. We will continue to keep you updated on our progress towards calling a Pastor/Associate in Ministry/Diaconal Minister/Deaconess.

Sincerely,

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CENTRAL STATES SYNOD



**SUGGESTED TEXT FOR LEADERS NO LONGER BEING CONSIDERED**

Date

Minnie Ster  
123 Any Street  
Anytown, Kansas/Missouri 12345

Dear Ms. Ster,

You were one of several *ministers* to whom it was our privilege to give consideration in our search for a *pastor* to serve \_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church. Our committee is very appreciative of the opportunity we had to meet and confer with you.

Knowing that you will appreciate some word as to the outcome of our effort, we are reporting that, in the light of the needs of our parish and the qualifications of persons with whom we have made contact, you are no longer being considered to serve \_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church.

Thank you for your courtesy to our committee. We wish to extend to you our best wishes in your ministry.

Sincerely,

Mary Smith

cc: Synod Bishop

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
CENTRAL STATES SYNOD**



**MUTUAL MINISTRY (STAFF SUPPORT) COMMITTEE GUIDELINES**

Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are expected to establish a Staff Support or Mutual Ministry Committee:

A staff support committee (in the absence of a staff support committee, their duties shall be fulfilled by the executive committee) shall be appointed jointly by the president and the pastor. Term of office shall be two years, three members to be appointed each successive year. Committee members will hold no other office in the congregation during their term. (C13.04 of the Model Constitution for Congregations.)

**Selection**

It is preferable for the Church council to have a part in the process of selection, perhaps by developing a pool of possible committee members or by ratifying the persons selected by the pastor/lay rostered leader and president. It is important that the members of the committee are trusted by both the pastoral and lay leadership of the congregation and that they are publicly recognized and affirmed in their task. In this small group, there should be no more than one Church council member. No two members of the mutual ministry committee should be serving on another committee together. Because of the importance of establishing new and rich relationships among the members of the mutual ministry committee, it is helpful if no two members are already close friends.

**Qualifications of Committee Members**

Persons named to this committee should be mature in judgment, able to keep confidences, and sensitive to needs, concerns and expectations of both the pastor and members of the congregation. They need to be centered in their faith in Christ, and not distracted by their own needs or biases. They should understand the ministry goals and policies of the congregation, as well as the ministry goals and policies of the Central States Synod and the church-wide expression of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**Meetings**

The committee should hold regular meetings. Special meetings may be called by the rostered leader, the chairperson of the committee, or the Bishop of the Central States Synod.

## **Functions of the Committee**

**MUTUAL MINISTRY:** This committee is a “people-building” group charged with making sure that the ministry goals of the congregation are carried out mutually by the pastoral leadership and the members. The committee observes and listens to the rostered leader and other congregational members to make sure that no one is under-functioning, nor over-functioning, in accomplishing the agreed upon goals for the congregation.

**SOUNDING BOARD:** The rostered leader should be able to look to this committee as a place where he or she can try out new ideas regarding ministry goals and receive honest feedback.

**PASTORAL SUPPORT:** Since the committee is concerned with pastoral effectiveness and the work of the congregation, it needs to support the leader in asking for adequate working conditions, fair and just compensation, and time away from the congregation for family life and personal renewal. This committee has no decision-making authority, but it may be an advocate for the leader before the Church Council, Finance Committee, Personnel Committee or other appropriate congregational forum.

**PARTNERS IN PLANNING FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION:** All rostered leaders are expected to participate in 50 contact hours of continuing education each year. The leader, in partnership with the committee, is to develop a continuing education plan that benefits the personal growth and needs of the leader in the context of the ministry goals of the congregation.

## **Accountability**

In terms of confidentiality, committee members are accountable to the leader and to one another. Information shared in meetings is not to be talked about outside the group unless permission is given by the one who shared it.

The Committee forwards any recommendations regarding the ministry of the congregation and/or the ministry of the rostered leader to the Church Council or appropriate committee for action and implementation. It has no authority to set policy or program. Any formal review of the leader’s and congregation’s ministry and performance is the responsibility of the Church Council.

No committee minutes will be kept. A general report will be made annually to the Church Council stating the number of meetings held and describing the leader’s continuing education program. Additional information will be included only with the consent of the leader.

**In order to help the mutual ministry committee work effectively and understand their common purpose, we strongly encourage the members of the committee to read together Pastor and People: Making Mutual Ministry Work, copyright 2003, Augsburg Fortress Publishing.**