

**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?