



Virginia Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Virginia Synod Call Process Handbook



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

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Tab 1-Letter of Introduction

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The Virginia Synod

of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ISLANDS DISTRICT, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Dear Friends,

As children of God and followers of Jesus, each of us is a part of the body of Christ and individually members of it. For the sake of God's mission and ministry, God's people gather together to share their gifts and to work together to share in God's mission to love and bless the world. Rostered ministers provide visionary leadership with God's people, carry out the work and mission of this church, share God's love with the world through the good news of Jesus Christ, and bring a variety of training, skills, interests and life experiences to the work they do in congregations, communities and partner organizations. Rostered ministers in the ELCA are called to serve as either Ministers of Word and Sacrament (pastors) or Ministers of Word and Service (deacons):

Ministers of Word and Sacrament. Pastors, serve with active, courageous faith to offer the hope of the sacraments and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ in congregations and other ministry settings. Some pastors are called to specialized ministries such as chaplaincy and campus ministry.

Ministers of Word and Service. Deacons serve in congregations and other ministries of the ELCA, including family ministries, youth, administration, volunteer ministry, social services, music or parish nursing. Deacons connect the church with the needs of the world and work to equip others to lead a living, active and caring Christian life.

The calling of a pastor or deacon is not the same as hiring an employee, and what is often accepted in business and industry is **NOT** the process used in the church. Respect for the call process includes prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, reflection upon the unique gifts and ministries of your congregation, and understanding that recommendations from the Office of the Bishop require research and time (and are to be taken seriously). The congregation, synod office, and pastoral or diaconal candidate are in an interdependent process, requiring cooperation by all.

The calling of a pastor or deacon is a time of significant change for rostered ministers, congregations, and the synod. There are special needs and circumstances in every situation, even as there are special opportunities to express love for one another, complete a ministry, make evaluations and prepare for the future in good order.

There are certain responsibilities that arise at this time for rostered ministers, congregations, and synod, and there are procedures that are uniquely ours, as Lutheran Christians. It is important for everyone to understand and respect each other's responsibilities and not act independently of one another. This booklet seeks to make clear the process to all concerned, how we relate to each other, and how we provide for the mobility of rostered ministers and the staffing of congregations. This handbook combines the polity of the ELCA, the Virginia Synod, and the congregation. Throughout the process, all concerned should be immersed in prayer, so that this process is not a mere mechanical event. We need God's Holy Spirit at every step, and it is right to ask for holy guidance.

The call process is intended to help you ask and answer one question: "In our deepest reflection and prayer, do we believe God is moving us to call this pastor or deacon to speak for Christ and to serve Christ in our parish?" Everything else is secondary to this question. Trust that this call process can help you in your discernment and know that God's faithfulness is present for you.

Sincerely,

The Office of the Bishop
Virginia Synod, ELCA

Tab 2-Call Process Directory

Virginia Synod Staff



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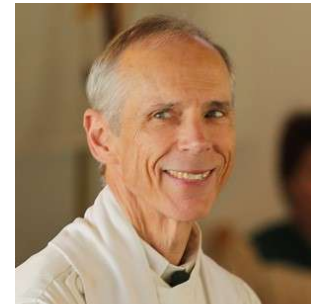
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Virginia Synod Congregations by Conference

Central Valley Conference

Bethany	Columbia Furnace
Bethel	Edinburg
Emanuel	Woodstock
Faith	Fort Valley
Martin Luther	Bergton
Mt. Calvary	Mt. Jackson
Mt. Zion	Mt. Jackson
Mt. Zion	New Market
Patmos	Woodstock
Prince of Peace	Basye
Rader	Timberville
Reformation	New Market
Solomon	Quicksburg
St. Jacob	Edinburg
St. James	Mt. Jackson
St. John	Timberville
St. Luke	Woodstock
St. Mark's	Quicksburg
St. Martin's	New Market
St. Mary's	Mount Jackson
St. Matthew	Toms Brook
St. Paul	Strasburg
St. Paul's	Timberville
St. Paul's	Edinburg
St. Peter	Toms Brook
St. Stephen	Strasburg
Zion	Edinburg

Germanna Conference

Christ	Fredericksburg
Good Shepherd	Orange
Grace and Glory	Palmyra
Hebron	Madison
Mt. Nebo	Rochelle
Our Saviour	Warrenton
Peace	Charlottesville
Resurrection	Fredericksburg
St. Luke's	Culpeper
St. Mark	Charlottesville
St. Peter's	Stafford
St. Thomas	Bealeton

Highlands Conference

Central	Burkes Garden
Christ	Wise
Ebenezer	Marion
Faith	Whitetop
Grace	Rural Retreat
Holy Advent	Wytheville
Holy Trinity	Wytheville
Immanuel	Bluefield
Lebanon	Wytheville
Red Oak	Ceres
Redeemer	Bristol
Sharon	Ceres
St. James	Chilhowie
St. John	Abingdon
St. Luke	Wytheville
St. Matthew	Damascus
St. Matthew	Bland
St. Paul	Rural Retreat
Zion	Crockett

New River Conference

Christ	Radford
Good Shepherd	Galax
Gladesboro	Gladesboro
Luther Memorial	Blacksburg
New Mt. Zion	Blacksburg
Our Saviour	Christiansburg
Shiloh	Blacksburg
St. Mark	Floyd
St. Michael	Blacksburg
Trinity	Pulaski
Zion	Floyd

Northern Valley Conference

Bethel	Winchester
Good Shepherd	Front Royal
Grace	Winchester
Gravel Springs	Star Tannery
St. John's	Winchester
Trinity	Stephens City

Virginia Synod Congregations by Conference

Page Conference

Beth Eden	Luray
Bethlehem	Luray
Grace	Luray
Morning Star	Luray
St. Luke	Stanley
St. Mark	Luray
St. Paul	Shenandoah
St. Peter	Shenandoah

Peninsulas Conference

Apostles	Gloucester
Gloria Dei	Hampton
Living Water	Kilmarnock
Our Saviour's	Norge
Reformation	Newport News
St. Mark	Yorktown
St. Paul's	Hampton
St. Stephen	Williamsburg
Trinity	Newport News

Richmond Conference

Christ	Richmond
Christ the King	Richmond
Epiphany	Richmond
First English	Richmond
Lakeside	Lake Gaston
Our Redeemer	Petersburg
Our Saviour	Richmond
Messiah	Mechanicsville
St. Luke	Richmond

Southern Conference

Ascension	Danville
Bedford	Bedford
Bethlehem	Lynchburg
Christ	Roanoke
College	Salem
Glade Creek	Blue Ridge
Holy Trinity	Lynchburg
Holy Trinity	Martinsville
St. Mark's	Roanoke

Southern Conference *(Continued)*

St. Philip	Roanoke
St. Timothy	Vinton
Trinity Ecumenical	Moneta
Trinity	Roanoke

Southern Valley Conference

Bethany	Lexington
Bethlehem	Waynesboro
Christ	Staunton
Faith	Staunton
Good Shepherd	Lexington
Grace	Waynesboro
Mt. Tabor	Staunton
Muhlenberg	Harrisonburg
New Mt. Olive	Fairfield
Pleasant View	Staunton
Redeemer	Middlebrook
Salem	Mt. Sidney
Shepherd of the Valley	Dayton
St. Jacobs-Spaders	Mt. Crawford
St. James	Fishersville
St. Paul	Mount Solon
St. Peter's	Churchville
Trinity	Harrisonburg
Zion	Waynesboro

Tidewater Conference

Emmanuel	Virginia Beach
Faith	Suffolk
First	Norfolk
Good Shepherd	Virginia Beach
Grace	Chesapeake
Grace	Franklin
Holy Communion	Portsmouth
Our Saviour	Virginia Beach
St. Andrew	Portsmouth
St. John	Norfolk
St. Michael	Virginia Beach
St. Timothy	Norfolk

Tab 3-Checklist for a Conclusion of a Call

Checklist for the Conclusion of a Call

As you prepare to conclude your ministry with your current rostered minister, please attend to the following checklist to help you and the rostered minister finish well.

1. The Rostered Minister Resigns:

- a. The rostered minister should personally inform the bishop, the call process coordinator (Rebecca Walls at walls@vasynod.org or 540-389-1000), and the council president of their decision to resign. The rostered minister will work with the council president to call a council meeting to inform them and to discuss the transition.
- b. The rostered minister prepares a letter of resignation that specifies the last day of service and includes appreciation for partnership with the congregation. The rostered minister should complete a letter of resignation whether they are retiring or resigning the call to begin a new call.
- c. The rostered minister presents the letter of resignation to the congregational council.

2. Congregational Council Receives the Letter or Resignation:

- a. At a regular or a called meeting of the congregational council.
- b. The council prepares a letter to the congregation announcing receipt of the rostered minister's resignation. As a gesture of love and courtesy, this letter should include a statement of thanks to the rostered minister (and family) for their partnership with the congregation in Christ's work.
- c. The rostered minister also prepares a letter to the congregation announcing their resignation. This letter should NOT be sent to the congregation until the council has been informed and has accepted the letter of resignation.
- d. The council, together with the rostered minister, should plan an appropriate farewell and Godspeed event.

3. Congregational Council Notices the Congregation:

- a. The council ensures that BOTH the rostered minister's letter of resignation and the council's letter to the congregation are sent to the congregation.
- b. These letters may be sent via email or postal mail, depending on the congregation's constitution.

4. Contact the Call Process Coordinator Immediately (This Step is Essential!)

- a. The congregation council chairperson immediately contacts the call process coordinator, Rebecca Walls at 540-389-1000 or walls@vasynod.org, to officially communicate the rostered minister's resignation and the effective date of the resignation. A copy of the rostered minister's letter of resignation and the council's letter to the congregation should be emailed or mailed to the call process coordinator.
- b. The congregation council chairperson schedules a meeting with the bishop's representative to conduct a thanksgiving for shared ministry, to discuss the call process, and congregation responsibilities during the pastoral interim.

5. Receive the Parish Register from the Rostered Minister:

- a. The parish register of each congregation shall remain the property of the congregation.
- b. Prior to their resignation, the rostered minister must ensure that these records are in proper order and are up-to-date. (The parish register consists of a record of all baptisms, confirmations, members received, dismissed, or removed from the congregation roll for any reason.) A checklist of the steps for the audit of the congregation record is in Appendix 1, page 1.
- c. A Certification of Parochial Records form must be submitted to the call process coordinator. The form is available at: <https://www.vasynod.org/resources/call-process/> or Appendix 2, page 3.

6. Settle Financial Accounts:

- a. A congregation shall settle financial obligations with the departing rostered minister before calling a successor. This will include salary as well as all benefits due as of the effective date of resignation.
- b. Any debt or other financial obligation incurred by the rostered minister to the congregation shall likewise be satisfactorily settled. If a departing rostered minister makes special requests, which extend beyond normal and customary departure procedures, these should be officially acted upon and recorded in the congregation council minutes and shared with the call process coordinator.

7. Collecting Important Information:

- a. The rostered minister should compile and share with the congregational council a list of the main ministry responsibilities they have on a day-to-day basis.
- b. The rostered minister should also compile and share a list of any homebound individuals and contact information with the congregation council.
- c. The rostered minister should write down and transfer all passwords to all computers and online accounts to the appropriate congregation leader.
- d. The council president (or representative) calls Portico to provide final day of employment for the rostered minister. If the rostered minister is retiring, Portico will provide a form that will need to be completed by the rostered minister and submitted to the call process coordinator.
- e. On their final day, the rostered minister returns all building and office keys.

8. Complete a Thanksgiving for shared Ministry with the Bishop's Representative:

- a. The council president schedules this meeting with the bishop's representative.
- b. The bishop's representative will lead the council and the rostered minister through a mutual celebration of thanksgiving for shared ministry.
- c. Following this thanksgiving, the rostered minister will leave and the bishop's representative will lead the council through the steps of the call process.
- d. As part of the call process information, the bishop's representative will discuss with the congregation council the options regarding pastoral care and pastoral leadership during the time of transition.

9. Honor and Thank the Resigning Rostered Minister (And Family)

- a. The congregational council may plan appropriate expressions of appreciation for the resigning rostered minister (and family). Possibilities may include a reception, including invitations to fellow rostered ministers, community leaders, and friends of the congregation; a formal dinner to include those suggested above; and a love gift to the rostered minister and family as an added expression of thanks. A special committee may be appointed to recommend the type of event and to coordinate all the congregation's expressions of appreciation. A Service of Closure or Godspeed would be appropriate to use as a part of the liturgy on the pastor's last Sunday with the congregation. See Appendix 3, page 4, for a suggested order of service.

10. Pastoral Care During the Time of Interim:

- a. Upon resignation of a call, the rostered minister no longer serves that congregation in the Ministry of Word and Sacrament or the Ministry of Word and Service. The rostered minister also will no longer serve the congregation at weddings, funerals, baptisms, or other pastoral care.
- b. The congregation council should be sure that the congregation understands this transition. After the rostered minister leaves, the council may insert occasionally in the worship bulletin or parish newsletter a message similar to this: "While Pastor/Deacon _____ is still a rostered minister in the church, they are no longer our called pastor/deacon. We love and cherish the relationship we have had, but we should not ask for further pastoral services such as counseling, baptisms, funerals, and weddings. Our current vice pastor/interim pastor is now available for pastoral care and concerns."

Tab 4-Rostered Ministers Ethics



Virginia Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Ministerium Covenant

As the Ministerium of the Virginia Synod, ELCA, we are rooted in the Gospel, affirm and cherish our call to Word and Sacrament and Service, and honor one another.

As a community of rostered ministers we covenant with each other to:

- **Support** and care for one another
- **View** our ministry as part of the wider church
- **Care** for family and self in healthy ways
- **Engage** in professional development (such as continuing education, consultation, professional development)
- **Meet** often with other rostered ministers for prayer, scripture study, fellowship, and support
- **Live** and serve in accordance with Vision and Expectations
- **Review** and renew this covenant each year

Values:

- **Opened** to the Holy Spirit
- **Centered** in Christ Jesus
- **Grounded** in Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions
- **Valued** places of ministry and our giftedness
- **Energized** proclaimers of the Gospel
- **Commissioned** to witness to Christ, reconcile people to God, and transform the world

Basic standards for Ministers (ELCA Roster Manual)
Ministry of Word and Sacrament

I. Constitutional description for **Ministry of Word and Sacrament and Standards for Ministers of Word and Sacrament**

7.10. MINISTRY OF THE BAPTIZED PEOPLE OF GOD 7.11. This church affirms the universal priesthood of all its baptized members. In its function and its structure this church commits itself to the equipping and supporting of all its members for their ministries in the world and in this church. It is within this context of ministry that this church calls some of its baptized members for specific ministries in this church.

7.20. MINISTRY OF WORD AND SACRAMENT 7.21. Within the people of God and for the sake of the Gospel ministry entrusted to all believers, God has instituted the office of ministry of Word and Sacrament. To carry out this ministry, this church calls and ordains qualified persons.

7.22. A minister of Word and Sacrament of this church shall be a person whose commitment to Christ, soundness in the faith, aptness to preach, teach, and witness, and educational qualifications have been examined and approved in the manner prescribed in the documents of this church; who has been properly called and ordained; who accepts and adheres to the Confession of Faith of this church; who is diligent and faithful in the exercise of the ministry; and whose life and conduct are above reproach.

A minister of Word and Sacrament shall comply with this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

7.23. The standards for acceptance and continuance of ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church shall be set forth in the bylaws.

7.24. The secretary of this church shall maintain a roster containing the names of ministers of Word and Sacrament who qualify on the basis of constitutional provisions 7.22., 7.23., and 7.31., and related bylaws.

7.30. STANDARDS FOR MINISTERS OF WORD AND SACRAMENT 7.31. In accordance with the description stated in 7.22., ministers of Word and Sacrament shall be governed by the following standards, policies, and procedures.

7.31.01. Basic Standards. Persons admitted to and continued in the ministry of Word and Sacrament of this church shall satisfactorily meet and maintain the following, as defined by this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and in policies developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council:

- a. commitment to Christ;
- b. acceptance of and adherence to the Confession of Faith of this church;
- c. willingness and ability to serve in response to the needs of this church;
- d. academic and practical qualifications for ministry, including leadership abilities and competence in interpersonal relationships;
- e. commitment to lead a life worthy of the Gospel of Christ and in so doing to be an example in faithful service and holy living;
- f. receipt and acceptance of a letter of call; and

g. membership in a congregation of this church.

7.31.02. Responsibilities. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:

1. preach the Word;
2. administer the sacraments;
3. conduct public worship;
4. provide pastoral care;
5. seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
6. impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications;
7. witness to the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad; and
8. speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.

b. Each pastor with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:

1. offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
2. relate to all schools and organizations of the congregation;
3. install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council;
4. with the council, administer discipline; and
5. endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA churchwide organization and its synod.

Basic standards for Ministers (ELCA Roster Manual)
Ministry of Word and Service

I. Constitutional description for **Ministry of Word and Service and Standards for Ministers of Word and Service**

7.50. MINISTRY OF WORD AND SERVICE 7.51. This church calls and receives onto the roster qualified persons to provide a ministry of Word and Service, exemplifying the life of Christ-like service to all persons and creation: nurturing, healing, leading, advocating dignity and justice, and equipping the whole people of God for their life of witness and service within and beyond the congregation for the sake of God's mission in the world.

7.52. A minister of Word and Service of this church shall be a person whose commitment to Christ, soundness in the faith, aptness to serve, teach, and witness, and educational qualifications have been examined and approved in the manner prescribed in the documents of this church; who has been properly called and received onto the roster; who accepts and adheres to the Confession of Faith of this church; who is diligent and faithful in the exercise of ministry; and whose life and conduct are above reproach. A minister of Word and Service shall comply with this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

7.60. STANDARDS FOR MINISTERS OF WORD AND SERVICE 7.61. In accordance with the description stated in 7.52, ministers of Word and Service shall be governed by the following standards, policies, and procedures:

7.61.01. Basic Standards. Persons admitted to and continued in the ministry of Word and Service of this church shall satisfactorily meet and maintain the following, as defined by this church's constitutions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions and in policies developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council:

- a. commitment to Christ;
- b. acceptance of and adherence to the Confession of Faith of this church;
- c. willingness and ability to serve in response to the needs of this church;
- d. academic and practical qualifications for ministry, including leadership abilities and competence in interpersonal relationships;
- e. commitment to lead a life worthy of the Gospel of Christ and in so doing to be an example in faithful service and holy living;
- f. receipt and acceptance of a letter of call; and
- g. membership in a congregation of this church.

7.61.02. Responsibilities. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:

- a. Be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service;
- b. Advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world;

- c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad;
- d. Equip the baptized for ministry in God's world that affirms the gifts of all people;
- e. Encourage mutual relationships that invite participation and accompaniment of others in God's mission;
- f. Practice stewardship that respects God's gift of time, talents, and resources;
- g. Be grounded in a gathered community for ongoing diaconal formation;
- h. Share knowledge of the ELCA and its wider ministry of the gospel, and advocate for the work of all expressions of this church; and
- i. Identify and encourage qualified persons to prepare for ministry of the gospel.

Tab 5-Call Process Overview

THE CALL PROCESS: Four Major Steps

- 1) Meeting of the council and the bishop's representative
- 2) Meeting of the conference dean with the congregation
- 3) Consultation between the call committee and the bishop's representative
- 4) The interview and call process

THE CALL PROCESS

(Overview)

1. This is to be a prayer process!
2. This is to be a confidential process but not a secretive process!
3. The role of the synod is to oversee the interviewing of healthy rostered ministers
4. Candidate list -- names can come from five possible sources
5. Candidate selection for interviewing
6. Contacting the candidate by the chair of the call committee
7. The first interview with the call committee only (Video Conferencing may be a part of this)
8. Worship leadership and preaching observation
9. Call committee selects the primary candidate
10. Primary candidate's second visit with congregation council and congregation
11. The call committee makes the recommendation to the congregation council
12. The congregation council makes the recommendation to the congregation
13. Special congregation meeting to extend call

Tab 6-Meeting of the Council and the Bishop's Representative

Step 1: Meeting of the Council and the Bishop's Representative

The council chair should be in contact with the call process coordinator to arrange a meeting with the bishop's representative and the congregation council. The dean of the conference may attend this meeting in addition, if available.

The agenda of this meeting will include the following:

1. Thanksgiving for shared ministry

Thanksgiving for shared ministry will be led by the bishop's representative and conducted between the resigning rostered minister, and the congregation's council. The purpose of the first part of the interview is to celebrate and give thanks for the shared ministry between the rostered minister and the congregation, see Appendix 4, page 6. Following this part, the rostered minister will be invited to leave, and the meeting continues between the bishop's representative and the council. At the second part of the meeting, the bishop's representative will lead the council through the steps of the call process.

2. A healthy ministry transition

For a congregation, the time of pastoral transition can be an anxious time. Many natural questions arise about the future. It also is a time when important discernment and decisions are made. Who do we discern God is calling us to be? Where do we discern God is calling us to go? What kind of pastoral leadership will we require to help us on that journey? How do we live together faithfully as God's people, especially in our differences?

It is crucial that this time is well spent. Take the time you need to grieve the rostered minister's absence. But also know and trust that God is with you in this time of transition. God is walking with you through this wilderness of uncertainty and God will accompany you into future, even as that future may seem unknown and unknowable. The God of the universe is God with us, always, to the end of the age. And God is with you now.

This time of transition is a gift from God so that the gathering of God's people may discern who you are, even without your rostered minister. The church is about God's mission and the Office of Ministry belongs to Christ, not to any one rostered minister. Therefore, your congregation continues as the people of God, even following the resignation of a rostered minister. Use this gift of time to discern who God is calling you to be. If not, the consequences may remain with a congregation for many years.

This is a time when a congregation needs to function in as healthy a manner as possible. That is the reason the office of the bishop strives to work with your congregation to provide pastoral care and pastoral leadership during this interim. The office of the bishop walks with you through the call process and will help shepherd this process with your congregation.

A central part of preparing a congregation to call a new rostered minister is to ensure congregation preparedness. That may seem like an obvious assumption, but readiness means more than just wanting to call a new rostered minister as quickly as possible. Readiness means the congregation is clear about its identity and mission, feels confident in its ability to manage its differences, and has achieved consensus as to the kind of pastoral leadership that is needed. Readiness means that leaders have received training in congregation leadership and feel confident in their ability to provide healthy leadership. Readiness also means a congregation has undergone sufficient self-reflection and growth, to understand its own identity and its own history, especially if that history includes negative pastoral relationships.

The office of the bishop encourages the congregation to complete a congregation inventory of some kind to best discern the gifts, mission, hopes, and dreams of the congregation. This inventory can be completed using small group discussions, informal congregation gatherings, and/or a congregation survey. A sample survey can be found in Appendix 5, page 7.

3. Discussion of Pastoral Care and Ministry Options During the Transition

The bishop of the synod is responsible, along with the congregation council, for the maintenance of pastoral care and leadership of the congregation in the time of transition. To fulfill this responsibility, the bishop, in consultation with the congregation council, will, if possible, appoint a vice pastor or an interim pastor during the congregation's pastoral transition. Normally, an appointment of the vice pastor will be made by the bishop prior to the resigning pastor's departure or shortly thereafter.

Options Arranged by the Congregation:

- a. Supply Pastors:** The responsibility for securing pastors to conduct worship services lies with THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL in consultation with the office of the bishop. To obtain a supply pastor for your congregation, go online to the Virginia Synod Website (www.vasynod.org). Under the resources tab choose "Pulpit-Supply," scroll until you see the list of supply pastors, which will include contact information and available dates for each pastor. The dean of your conference can also provide a list of pastors who are able to supply. All supply pastors should be compensated for their services according to the current synodical guidelines shown in Appendix 6, page 12. To use supply pastors is to allow the congregation to experience a variety of worship leaders and preaching styles during the time of transition. The downside can be that visitors new to

the congregation and community will not experience continuity of the same Sunday morning pastor.

- b. Stated Supply:** A pastor may agree to conduct Sunday morning worship services for an extended, contracted time. This allows continuity in worship from one Sunday to the next. Visitors may develop a relationship during this transition time with the pastor as well. The downside is that the congregation does not see and hear a variety of leadership styles of worship and preaching.

Options Arranged by the Office of the Bishop:

a. Vice Pastor

Normal duties of a vice pastor include:

- Attendance at congregation council meetings
- Emergency services in crisis situations
- Arrangements for weddings, baptisms, and funerals
- Certification that parish records are in order during the time of the pastoral vacancy
- Pastoral oversight of the congregation

For the performance of these duties, the synod recommends a minimum honorarium of \$500.00 a month plus reimbursement for travel (at prevailing IRS rate) and other expenses. If a congregation averages less than 50 on a Sunday, the suggested honorarium is \$250.00 per month. Duties and compensation will be detailed in a written vice pastor agreement between the bishop, vice pastor, and council. This agreement will be provided by the call process coordinator.

b. Interim Pastors

An interim pastor appointed for a specific time to serve the congregation in a specific ministry of transition to help the congregation move toward the process of seeking a regularly called pastor. This type of interim ministry may involve the full-time or part-time services of the pastor who is appointed by the bishop after approval of the congregation council. Duties and compensation shall be detailed in a "Contract for Services" between the bishop, interim pastor, and council. This contract for services will be provided by the call process coordinator.

Unless previously agreed to by the Synod Council, an interim pastor is not available for a regular call to the congregation served during this time of transition and shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor (*C9.07. in the Model Constitution for Congregations).

An interim pastor appointed to serve in a multiple-staff congregation may be an associate/assistant pastor already serving in the congregation or may be a pastor from

outside the congregation. If the associate/assistant pastor were appointed to be the interim, then that person would not be eligible for a call as senior pastor.

Availability of the interim pastor for many duties may be limited, indicating the need for congregation committees to be active. It is the duty of THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL to inform parishioners of the interim pastor's duties to avoid unrealistic expectations of a person who likely will not be a full-time pastor. The council also needs to designate persons or committees to oversee certain aspects of the congregation's interim life - such as the newsletter, care of the church property, and other administrative tasks. Consultation with the church secretary and other staff will aid in such designations. Such arrangements need to be communicated to members of the congregation.

AUTHORITY OF THE VICE PASTOR OR INTERIM PASTOR

During service to the congregation, the vice pastor or interim pastor shall have the rights and duties of a regularly called pastor. The pastor is to represent the presence of the bishop during the time of transition.

CLOSURE OF THE INTERIM RELATIONSHIP

Upon completion of service, THE VICEPASTOR OR INTERIM PASTOR shall certify to the call process coordinator that the parochial records for the period for which they were responsible are in order. It is appropriate for some recognition of services to be arranged by THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL at the end of the pastor's appointment.

OTHER PASTORS' RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE CONGREGATION

The vice pastor or interim pastor should normally be requested to perform all ministerial acts within the congregation. Members of the congregation shall not call on any other rostered minister for ministerial acts without the express invitation of the vice pastor or interim pastor. The bishop will instruct the departing rostered minister not to return to the congregation to conduct services, including weddings and funerals, after termination of ministry there.

4. Important Initial Council Responsibilities

- a. Ensure that the ministry site profile for the congregation is completed
- b. Appoint a call committee

A. Discussion of plans for completion of a ministry site profile: The development of a Ministry Site Profile (MSP) is a very important step completed prior to the calling of a new rostered minister. It is helpful in at least four ways:

First, it provides an opportunity for the congregation to assess its vision, its sense of mission, its goals, its current ministries, its current context for ministry, and its relationship to the whole Church.

Second, it provides the congregation call committee members with basic information and a description of leadership needs which will guide their work.

Third, the profile will assist the bishop's representative in recommending candidate(s) to be considered by the call committee.

Fourth, it provides a picture of the congregation for the candidates as they consider serving the congregation.

Under the ELCA program, the completed profile is placed where rostered ministers may see its contents. The profile may be placed on the website of the congregation.

The ministry site profile form of the congregation may be accessed by:

1. Go to the Virginia Synod Website at: www.vasynod.org.
2. When the home page appears click on 'RESOURCES'
3. Scroll down to the "Call Process" section
4. Click on "Ministry Site Profile (MSP)"
5. Look in the middle of the page under 'Ministry Sites' and click on the "Ministry Site Profile" button. You will be directed to a login page. If you do not already have an account with the ELCA, click the option to "Fill out a profile action" where you will create an account with an ID and password. This account will allow you to log in as needed to complete your profile. It is important for you to save the ID and Password you created in a safe place to allow you to update, edit and complete your profile as needed. (Appendix 7, Page 13)

B. DISCUSSION OF THE CALL COMMITTEE AND PROCESS

- a. **Discussion of plans for appointment of the call committee** – The call committee is extremely important in the selection of a new rostered minister. The call committee may either be appointed by the congregation council or elected by the congregation in accordance with the congregation constitution. **However, the committee should not meet prior to their meeting with the bishop's representative.**
- b) **Purpose of the call committee** – This committee, seeking God's will through prayer, interviews, and possible visits will recommend a candidate to the congregation council

for recommendation to the congregation. Members of the committee may remain as a transition committee for the rostered minister's early ministry.

- c) **Make-up of the call committee** – The number of persons on the call committee should be determined by the congregation's constitution. If a number is not specified in the constitution, an appropriate number for the committee is six members. The call committee should have as much of a cross section of the congregation as is possible. Each should be an active member who communes and contributes regularly. The congregation council should appoint the call committee chairperson. A call committee secretary should be designated by the committee to record the actions of the committee. The chairperson should be in weekly email updates with the call process coordinator for timely communication about current status of candidates and where the call committee is in the process. It will also allow the opportunity for questions and concerns to be shared in a timely fashion.

Names, addresses, and phone numbers (home and office) of all call committee members should be mailed to the call process coordinator as soon as they are named using the form provided. Be sure to designate the names of the chair and the secretary. A copy of the form is shown in Appendix 8, page 14.

- d) **Installation of the call committee** – This is an opportunity for prayerful commitment of the call committee members to their task, to ask God's blessings, to invite the prayers of the congregation throughout the process and to introduce the call committee to the congregation. Appendix 9, page 15, is a sample installation service.
- e) **Expenses of the call committee** – The congregation should pay all expenses of the call committee while they are performing responsibilities of the call process. This should be agreed upon at the establishment of the committee.
- f) **Review of the call process** – Opportunity for questions and concerns will be given.
- g) **Discussion of compensation guidelines** -The council needs to develop a proposed compensation package for use by the call committee. The synod's "Leadership Support Guidelines for Rostered Ministers of Word and Sacrament and the Leadership Support Guidelines for Rostered Ministers of Word and Service", which is published each summer, should be used in developing this package. This document can be found by going to www.vasynod.org. Under the "Resources" tab, click on "Compensation Guidelines". If the congregation is not able to meet synodical guidelines for salary, they should discuss with the call process coordinator the possibility of a part-time pastoral situation.
- h) **Keeping the congregation informed** - Important milestones in the call process as well as other items of interest needed to keep the congregation informed can be documented on a chart similar to the one shown in Appendix 10, page 16, and posted in a prominent place in the church.

Tab 7-Meeting of the Conference Dean with the Congregation

Step 2: Meeting of the Conference Dean with the Congregation

The congregation president should contact the conference dean to arrange a meeting of the dean with the congregation, including the call committee (if formed) and the church council. Anyone interested in learning the call process is invited to attend this meeting.

The agenda of this meeting will include the following:

- 1) Introduce who you are
- 2) Open with Prayer
- 3) This time could include the introduction of the call committee to the congregation if established. Or mention the council will be working on establishing a call committee for your congregation.
- 4) If ministry options are already in place give thanks for that or provide an overview of the pastoral care and ministry options during the pastoral transition. This information can be found starting on page 14.
- 5) Include information about the value of taking the time to be together and vision who they are as God's People, without their previous rostered minister.
- 6) This meeting will provide information on how the call process works. The dean is invited to briefly walk through the basic steps of the call process following pages 21-30 of this handbook.
- 7) Provide some time for questions
- 8) Closing prayer

Tab 8-Consultation between the Call Committee and the Bishop's Representa...

Step 3: Consultation between the Call Committee and the Bishop's Representative

The chair of the call committee should be in contact with the call process coordinator to arrange a meeting with the bishop's representative and the committee. The bishop's representative will provide a link to the call process handbook or printed copy as well as how to formulate your compensation and benefits package.

The agenda for this meeting may include the following:

- 1) Review and clarification of the call process. (Opportunity for questions and concerns will be given)
- 2) Discussion of the process to receive name of candidates
- 3) Discussion of compensation and benefits for the rostered minister
- 4) Discussion of the ministry site profile (MSP)

Tab 9-The Call Process

Step 4: The Call Process

- 1. THIS IS TO BE A PRAYER PROCESS!** The congregation council should be asking the whole congregation to be in daily prayer for the call committee and the process for discerning a rostered minister for the congregation and its mission. A prayer petition should be in every Sunday Worship Prayers of the Church.

Prayer Petition (Example): Lord of the Church, we give thanks to you for your death and resurrection, and that you are the Good Shepherd. Hear our prayer for our call committee and its work of discernment, and hear our prayer for your sending to us that rostered minister that will be a strong partner with us in the joy and service of your Gospel for those within your Church and those beyond our walls in this community. In Your Name we pray. Amen

Open every meeting with prayer.

- 2. THIS IS TO BE A CONFIDENTIAL PROCESS BUT NOT A SECRETIVE PROCESS!**

The congregation should be kept updated on the progression of the process, but the names of rostered ministers being interviewed are to remain confidential until a primary candidate is identified.

Confidentiality is a MUST. The careers of rostered ministers may be jeopardized if news of their consideration is prematurely divulged. It can be harmful to programs and plans of other congregations. Because a rostered minister agrees to respond to a call committee does not mean that they are looking to leave the parish they currently serve. They may, however, believe it to be a possible leading of the Holy Spirit.

- 3. THE ROLE OF THE SYNOD IS TO OVERSEE THE INTERVIEWING OF HEALTHY ROSTERED MINISTERS:**

All names are to be approved by the call process coordinator before being considered by the call committee. The task of the call committee is to recommend the best candidate to the congregation council. The task of the call process coordinator is to recommend only healthy rostered ministers for consideration. Before recommending a candidate for interview the call process coordinator will make contact with the rostered minister's bishop to ascertain if there are conditions that have happened OR ARE PENDING that would preclude the consideration of a rostered minister as a HEALTHY candidate for the call committee. Therefore, all names should be given to the call process coordinator for approval PRIOR to anyone making contact with a rostered minister to inform them of wanting to submit their names for consideration.

To help keep the congregation and the call process coordinator partnered in this process we have provided a form for you to provide weekly updates on your progress. See Appendix 11, page 16.

4. CANDIDATE NAMES

All candidate names will come from the office of the bishop through the call process coordinator. Remember the call process is not the same as hiring an employee. Having respect, taking the time, and trusting this process is important. The discernment from the office of the bishop on each candidate will help find the best fit for the life of your congregation.

NAMES CAN COME FROM FIVE POSSIBLE SOURCES:

- a) Names that are nominated from congregation members
- b) Names recommended by the call process coordinator
- c) Rostered ministers that identify themselves
- d) Mobility papers
- e) First call candidates assigned to the Virginia Synod

If the committee desires to add other names to its list, this is to be immediately reported to the call process coordinator. Contacts with an out-of-synod candidate should be made only after the call process coordinator has obtained clearance from the bishop of that synod and verification of Boundary Training within the last three years. At that time the call process coordinator will give permission for them to be contacted. "A structured interview" with candidates may be required prior to the candidate's name being given to a call committee. This may be done by the bishop's representative.

The committee cannot contact any candidate until they have the approval from the call process coordinator. The call process coordinator will provide up to three candidates from the above sources. All three candidates must receive an initial interview before additional candidates will be provided for consideration.

When the committee drops consideration of a name on the list, this is to be immediately reported to the call process coordinator, and the committee should contact the candidate to let them know that they are no longer being considered by the committee.

5. CANDIDATE SELECTION FOR INTERVIEWING

The call committee and the call process coordinator will consider characteristics of each candidate, as follows:

- Abilities: talents, training, experience;
- Availability: the length of the present service; projects in the rostered minister's ministry that should not be interrupted;

- Acceptability: for ministry in this particular congregation, including personal background, habits, and customs, etc.
- Credential: completed a Boundary Training Workshop within the last three years, with verification thereof, or registered for one in the coming three months (see Appendix 12, page 18).

6. CONTACTING THE CANDIDATE

The chair of the call committee should contact the candidate(s) received from the call process coordinator and set up a time to meet with the call committee. If the rostered minister agrees to an interview, a packet of information about the ministry site community should be sent to the candidate ahead of the visit. It is very helpful for Congregation Councils and/or call committees to assemble a packet of information to send to a candidate whose “Rostered Minister Profile” has been made available to you. The purpose of the packet is to provide helpful information about your congregation and community beyond the information they will learn from your MSP. Helpful items to include in the packet are:

- Bulletins from the last month
- Last three Newsletters
- Annual Report
- Budget
- History summary or Anniversary Booklet outlining congregational history
- Picture directory
- Other items containing photos of congregational activities
- Web site and social media information
- Community Welcome Packet from your Chamber of Commerce
- Visitors guide to your community
- Map of the community and directions to the church building

It is helpful to send the person this packet prior to their first interview. A rostered minister accepting an interview is open to the Holy Spirit. Acceptance of an interview does not mean the rostered minister is looking for a call.

7. THE FIRST INTERVIEW--THE CALL COMMITTEE ONLY

It is possible to make use of video conferencing as a way of making contact with a candidate to determine whether or not you would wish to make an interview that involves coming to the congregation site. Specific tools you may use to video conference would include Skype or Zoom. Recognize that a video conferencing conversation provides a view of the candidate, but it is not as effective as personal presence. See Appendix 13, page 19.

If you choose to bring a candidate for an interview at your congregation, invite the rostered minister and their immediate family if applicable to visit the parish. The church council should

authorize expenses, and the call committee should consider overnight accommodations. The first interview at the proposed call site normally has three phases, but this can be adjusted.

- Provide a guided tour of the parish. Show the total community, such as other churches, businesses, neighborhoods of all types (including the poorest), schools, hospitals, recreation areas and parks, etc. Tour the church facilities. Describe the usage, maintenance, value, and ideas for possible future consideration.
- An evening meal in a relaxed and confidential setting is encouraged. This should be with the rostered minister, their immediate family, if applicable, and members of the call committee. This will provide an informal way of getting to know one another before the more formal interview time.
- An evening meeting for the planned interview. If the candidate desires, it is appropriate for a spouse to be present for the interview, but remember that the spouse is not to be interviewed.

Call committees should consider asking candidates for their last annual report from their congregation. The call committee should expect the candidate to request their congregation's last annual report and the congregational council minutes of the last year.

Each person on the committee is assigned a certain area to explain current programs, and ask the prospective rostered minister questions. (e.g., Education, Evangelism, Youth, Administration, Worship, etc.)

Discover the style, leadership, goals and expectations of one another. Other discussion as desired.

Be careful that the questions asked do not "imply" certain things (e.g., that the spouse will be expected to assume more historically traditional roles, such as organist, choir director, Sunday School teacher, etc.) Do not ask "leading questions" that would require the Wisdom of Solomon to answer, especially if a previous rostered minister "did it wrong!" Hypothetical questions are acceptable. Only non-discriminatory questions may be asked.

The ministry site profile should be reviewed. Questions that the call committee might like to ask the prospective rostered minister are shown in Appendix 14, page 20; questions likely to be asked by the prospective rostered minister are shown in Appendix 15, page 21.

If the interview doesn't seem to be generating excitement, the chair will thank the candidate and spouse for coming and spending time with the committee. However, if the interview goes very well and there is energy from the interview, the chair will ask the candidate, "How could we hear you lead worship and preach?"

It is the responsibility of the call committee to follow up with the candidate and update the call process coordinator after an interview. The three options for an update could include:

- Thank the candidate for the interview and inform the candidate that the call committee has decided to not continue with the call process with that candidate.
- Thank the candidate for the interview and let the candidate know that the call committee is continuing to interview other candidates and will provide the candidate with an update on the process with the additional interviews are complete.
- Thank the candidate for the interview and inform the candidate that the call committee would like to proceed by observing their worship leadership and preaching.

8. WORSHIP LEADERSHIP AND PREACHING

It will be important for the call committee to observe and hear worship leadership and preaching. The call committee should work with a candidate to care for this important step. Some ways to do this are:

- Visit a prospective rostered minister's home church for Sunday worship IF the rostered minister agrees to this visit. (Oftentimes this places the potential rostered minister in a very awkward position),
- Or have the prospective rostered minister visit and conduct worship in your church,
- Or ask for an audio or video of the rostered minister conducting worship and preaching a sermon.
- Review the website of the candidate/parish and video/audio sermons, etc.

9. THE CALL COMMITTEE SELECTS THE PRIMARY CANDIDATE

The call committee will interview until they have a candidate that seems right for the life of the congregation. There will be high energy, joy, and hope within the discussion. There will be comments about the rightness of this person and/or how this person meets the needs of the congregation at this time in its life. Comments are made about how this seems to be a great "match" to the committee (it's as if you are offering an engagement ring accepted or rejected).

Select the primary candidate and inform the call process coordinator at once of your choice. That person will then be directed to either accept or reject your invitation for further consultation. If the person accepts, that person is NOT to be under consideration anywhere else until this possibility is resolved. Also, the committee is to explore no other possibilities until this candidate's call is either extended or fails to come before the church council or congregation for a vote.

NOTE!!!! DO NOT PLACE A PICTURE OR ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE PRIMARY CANDIDATE ON YOUR WEBSITE! Your selection will be instantly known internationally, and it will be known at the home parish of your primary candidate causing a great deal of anxiety within that parish. Discuss all announcements and procedures with your primary candidate before they are done so that your primary candidate will feel in partnership with you through this important step.

Courtesy calls or letters for prompt communication to candidates no longer under consideration should be made promptly. An illustration of several sample letters that may be used to end a relationship between a call committee and a candidate-rostered minister or to let them know you want to continue if they feel the same is shown in Appendix 16, page 22.

Call committees and rostered ministers who are in a primary candidate relationship should make email contact with the call process coordinator each Monday for purpose of indicating status of activities or asking questions.

Before the next step the congregation council must complete the compensation package for the primary candidate. The call process coordinator is available to work with the council to complete the package. See Appendix 17, page 24 for the steps and form to be completed for a pastor and Appendix 18, page 29 for the steps and form to be completed for a deacon.

10. THE PRIMARY CANDIDATE'S SECOND VISIT

Invite the rostered minister and, if the candidate desires, their immediate family to return. The candidate, and if the candidate desire, their spouse for an interview with the congregational council and to meet informally with the congregation. The chairperson of the call committee informs council and the congregation of reasons why they are excited about the primary candidate.

With discussed consultation with primary candidate, announce the date, time and place to the congregation including the biographical data.

This visit has several important parts:

- Meet with a realtor to look at potential homes or carefully tour the parsonage.
- Share a meal with the congregation council and spouses
- Conduct an interview with council in same style as with call committee
- Present a compensation package to the candidate.
- Arrange for an informal time with the whole congregation to meet the rostered minister and immediate family.
- Worship time/devotional time can be a part of the visit as well.
- Arrange for overnight accommodations in a local hotel.
- When the primary candidate leaves you have just begun to build excitement within important weeks of necessary steps that lead to a successful rostered minister.

11. THE CALL COMMITTEE MEETS 5-7 DAYS LATER TO MAKE THE RECOMMENDATION TO THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL

After five to seven days in which the congregation has had an opportunity to give feedback, the call committee should come together to decide whether or not to recommend the

candidate. Discuss whether excitement is growing or diminishing. A 2/3 vote is necessary to recommend candidate to the congregational council, though a unanimous vote is best.

During the week the candidate and the chairperson of the call committee will be in communication regarding any changes in the compensation package or benefits. The call committee needs to recommend a compensation package to the council as well.

12. THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL HOLDS SPECIAL MEETING TO DECIDE TO RECOMMEND THE PRIMARY CANDIDATE TO THE CONGREGATION

When the call committee votes to recommend, they will then request the congregation council to call a special meeting in order to consider recommendation of the primary candidate to the congregation. The chairperson of the call committee will bring the recommendation to the council and will provide reasons why the primary candidate is being recommended by the call committee at this time in the history and mission of the congregation.

Provide at least 4 reasons why the primary candidate is being recommended.

Discussion will follow concerning the primary candidate.

- **MOTION TO RECOMMEND ROSTERED MINISTER TO CONGREGATION**

A motion shall be made and seconded to recommend the election of the rostered minister by the congregation. It is recommended that at least 2/3 of council's total membership concur before the name is presented to the congregation. This 2/3 council vote provision needs to be agreed upon before the vote is taken.

- **COMPENSATION VOTE**

The council shall also determine a compensation package to be recommended to the congregation for its approval. This package should carry the agreement of the primary candidate to be recommended. A majority vote of the council is needed for presentation to the congregation.

13. THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL ANNOUNCES THE SPECIAL CONGREGATION MEETING TO VOTE TO CALL A PRIMARY CANDIDATE

- Announce in worship service for two consecutive Sundays prior to the announced date of the meeting
- 10 days before the meeting, mail compensation package and bio of primary candidate to every voting member

THIS IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY

The council president contacts the call process coordinator to arrange for a Call Document to be prepared.

When the council is ready to recommend the primary candidate to the congregation, it shall notify the call process coordinator. The call process coordinator will appoint someone to conduct the meeting (usually the congregational lay president or vice-president).

14. SPECIAL CONGREGATION MEETING TO EXTEND CALL

See Appendix 19, page 33 for the agenda of this meeting and the required follow-up.

- Secret ballot needing 2/3 vote for calling of primary candidate
- Majority vote to approve a compensation package

15. PHONING THE CALLED CANDIDATE

Following the specially called meeting of the congregation, the president of the council and the chair of the call committee should phone the primary candidate and report the actual vote of both actions taken.

If they have called the primary candidate, they should speak to the sending of the Call Document to the primary candidate. Once the primary candidate receives the call document, they will have 30 days to accept or decline the call of the congregation.

16. BECOMING A WELCOMING COMMITTEE

Once the called primary candidate agrees to accept the call of the congregation, the call committee now takes on the role of a welcoming committee for the arrival of the rostered minister and their family.

THE CONGREGATION MEETING

The presider of the meeting (usually the President of the Congregation) calls the meeting to order. See Appendix 20, page 35 for a sample script.

Quorum

The person presiding at the meeting shall determine that a quorum is present. The quorum is established by the congregation's Constitution/Bylaws.

First Recommendation

The first recommendation presented by the council is that the rostered minister be elected. It shall be seconded and discussed. The council and/or call committee should present information about the rostered minister and their rationale for making the recommendation. Only the one name recommended by council can be voted on at this meeting. The vote shall be by secret, written ballot. No absentee or proxy votes shall be accepted. A TWO-THIRDS (2/3) MAJORITY OF THE VOTES CASTED shall be necessary for election.

Second Recommendation

The second motion presented by the council shall be to approve the compensation package (salary, allowances, and other benefits) offered to the rostered minister-elect. It shall be seconded, discussed, and voted on by the congregation.

Amendments to the package recommended by the council can be made by a motion that is seconded and can be passed by a majority vote of the congregation for the amended package. If the amended package fails then you go back to the original compensation package that was presented and have a motion, seconded, discussed and voted on by the congregation.

The vote needed to approve the compensation package is a simple majority; it may be taken by voice vote, show of hands, or written ballot. If the approved package was amended the council president will call the candidate to provide the information. The candidate has thirty days to accept or decline the call. If they decline the call has failed. It should be noted that if the amounts in this package differ from the approved budget, then a favorable vote, in effect, changes the budget for the year.

The Call Succeeds

After the rostered minister has been elected and the compensation package approved, both of which are needed to form a legal contract, the congregational council shall formally issue a Call.

The council president will call the call process coordinator to provide an update on the call and the date the vote was passed. The Office the Bishop will issue the official Call Document for the rostered minister. See Appendix 21, page 38 for a sample Call Document. When the Call Document is received, the officers are to sign the document. Once all signatures are completed the officers present the Call Document to the rostered minister. A copy of the completed call document will need to be held by the congregation and a copy mailed to the call process coordinator. The rostered minister shall accept or decline the call within 30 days, unless it is agreed upon otherwise.

The call fails

In the event that the call fails, due to

- failure to receive the necessary 2/3 majority of the votes cast for rostered minister, or
- failure to receive the necessary majority of votes case for compensation, or
- failure of the rostered minister to accept the call,

In the event the call failed follow these steps:

1. The call committee chair will notify the call process coordinator

2. The secretary of the congregational council will draft a letter to the primary candidate to report officially the results of the congregational meeting and to conclude the call relationship. Copies of this letter should also go to the call process coordinator and the congregational council.
3. The whole process must be repeated with another candidate.

THE CALL IS ACCEPTED!

This can be an exciting time of thanksgiving and looking ahead for a congregation and their rostered minister-elect. At the same time, it can be a difficult time for the rostered minister-elect and their family. A congregation must be very sensitive to the needs of its new rostered minister, from leaving one ministry and moving to a new community to the start-up of a new ministry and everything that comes with it. A rostered minister who accepts a call must be sensitive, not only to the congregation they are entering, but also to the congregation they are leaving, since either are experiencing a transition, whether joyful or grieving or a combination of both.

Starting Time

The time frame from acceptance of call to arrival may vary and should be agreed upon by both the council of the congregation where the rostered minister is presently serving and the council of the calling congregation. The chair or vice-chair of the congregation council, which is issuing a call, should consult with the rostered minister-elect to determine when the acceptance can be announced publicly. The acceptance of the call should be conveyed promptly to the call process coordinator. Both congregations should be notified as to when the new ministry shall begin.

The Transition

Remember that all rostered ministers do not place equal priority on the same activities. The habitual activities of a former rostered minister may be rare for a new rostered minister. During this new ministry transition it is important for a congregation and its new rostered minister to share expectations openly and negotiate priorities.

If the new rostered minister has family who will be moving to the area with them, be sure to welcome every member and be sensitive to each of their needs. Decide on appropriate situations for introducing each of them to the congregation and the community. There may be a need for assistance in finding a job for the new rostered minister's spouse or if there are children in the family offer information on daycares, education, etc.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

TERM CALLS

Normally a call is without limitation of term. However, the synodical constitution (S14.18) makes provision for what is called a "term" call as follows:

"With the approval of the synodical bishop expressed in writing, which sets forth a clear statement of the purpose to be served by such a departure from the normal rule of permanency of the call as expressed in S14.13, a congregation may call a rostered minister for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop of this synod or a representative of the bishop shall meet with the rostered minister and representative of the congregation for a review of the call. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of S14.13."

CO-TERMINUS CALLS

In the case of multiple-staff ministries, if the call is to be extended to an associate pastor, assistant pastor or second pastor, a co-terminus call should be STRONGLY considered. A co-terminus call means that with the departure of the senior pastor, the other pastor(s) and rostered staff will resign effective upon the receipt and acceptance of another call or the arrival of the next senior pastor. Whenever a co-terminus call is being considered, the bishop will discuss the implications of such a call with congregational council, call committee, and candidate.

ROSTERED OR CLERGY COUPLES

A rostered couple is the designation for rostered ministers who are married to each other. Some rostered couples prefer to serve in the same congregations and others wish to serve in different congregations. Couples and congregations can often work out creative ways of meeting each of their needs (for example, in situations where the need is for "more than one and less than two"). In general, guidelines for team ministry would apply, but there may be special considerations concerning housing, childcare allowance, etc. The ELCA Board of Pensions has guidelines for rostered couples so that insurance premiums need not be paid but once for a family. The Board of Pensions or the bishop's office may be contacted for up-to-date information

MULTIPLE-POINT PARISH

In the case of a parish with two or more congregations, each congregation votes separately on whether or not to call the rostered minister. A majority in each congregation and two-thirds of the total number of votes cast in all congregations shall be necessary for approval. If the call is approved, the congregations authorize the joint council to issue the call and to agree on the salary and other items of support.

If one congregation approves the call and another does not, the call is not issued. No part of a joint parish calls a rostered minister without the participation of the other.

PART-TIME MINISTRIES

In order to qualify as a call part-time ministries require 15 hours of work each week, and compensation which appropriately corresponds to the synod's compensation guidelines.

IN CONCLUSION

When the process of calling a rostered minister has ended and the call has been accepted, years of opportunity for growth in Christ lie ahead as the congregation pursues God's mission through its ministry. The work done by the call committee will bear fruit through the mutual ministry of its congregation and new rostered minister. All ordinations are conducted by the Bishop of the Synod. All installations will be conducted by the dean of the conference.

Tab 10-Appendices

Appendix 1

AUDIT OF THE CONGREGATIONAL RECORD UPON THE RESIGNATION OF THE ROSTERED MINISTER

The Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states that "The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster." (C12.07.) The model constitution also states, "The pastor of this congregation shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation." (C9.12.) It is therefore important to audit these records:

Annually,

- a. upon the resignation of the pastor, and
- b. when an interim pastor concludes service to a congregation

The following steps will insure a thorough audit of the congregation's records ("check" the line to the left of each item indicating completion of that part of the audit):

1. Verify that the Congregational Council information is up to date.
2. Review the listing of new members for the year. Confirm that the list is accurate and includes all appropriate information on the individual and their method for joining the congregation.
3. Review the listing of members removed for the year. Confirm that the list is accurate and includes appropriate information on the end of the individual's membership. If the individual is deceased and the funeral was performed through the congregation, cross-check to ensure that the individual's funeral is listed in the funeral section of the records.
4. Review the listing of baptisms for the year and confirm accuracy.
5. Review the listing of confirmations for the year and confirm accuracy.
6. Review the listing of marriages for the year and confirm that the dates of the weddings are included. If a last name was changed following the wedding, confirm that the name was updated elsewhere in the records.
7. Review the listing of funerals. Check to see if the individuals listed in the funeral record were members and if so, confirm that they have been removed from the "Roll of Members".
8. When auditing the records upon the resignation of a rostered minister, verify that the appropriate information has been recorded in the "Pastor" section.



Certification of Parochial Records

Expert from the Virginia Synod Constitution, Section S14.15:

The parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members transferred or dismissed, members who have become inactive, or members excluded from the congregation shall be kept accurately and permanently, they shall remain the property of each congregation. At the time of the closure of a congregation, such records shall be sent to the regional archives. The secretary of the congregation shall attest to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before:

- a. Installation in another field of labor, or
- b. The issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.

Dear Mr./Ms. Secretary:

This is to certify that the parochial records of _____

Lutheran Church, in _____ Virginia, which have been the responsibility of _____, Rostered Minister, have been checked and found to be in good order, and have been given into the custody of the secretary of the congregation.

Signed: _____, Secretary

Countersigned: _____, Dean

Date: _____

Please Mail To: Virginia Synod, Call Process Coordinator, P.O. Box 70, Salem VA 24153

Appendix 3

SERVICE OF CLOSURE

PASTOR: On (date) _____, we shared together in a service of Celebration the beginning of a new ministry. It is now time to give thanks for the life we have shared in Christ. It is also time for me to move on to the next chapter in my spiritual journey on which the Lord is leading me.

I have found our time together rewarding and memories of what we have shared will always remain precious and meaningful.

PEOPLE: The Lord is loving to everyone; God's compassion is over all God's works. All your works praise you, O Lord, and your Faithful servants bless you. (Psalm 145: 9-10)

PASTOR: Let us thank God for what these past years have meant by praying together the General Thanksgiving:

PASTOR & PEOPLE Almighty God, Lord of all mercies, we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks for all your goodness and loving kindness to us and to all people. We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all, for your incomparable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies that with truly thankful hearts we may make known your praise, not only with our lips, but in lives, by giving up ourselves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days; Through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with You and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

PASTOR: Dear friends, you have allowed me to share the responsibilities of the ordained ministry in your midst. At the celebration of a new ministry, you presented me with symbols expressing my special role among you. It is time for me to return to you what you have lent me.

I have tried to proclaim the Word of God faithfully among you. Here is the Bible, which expresses this.

(The Bible is presented to a member of the congregation.)

PEOPLE: Thanks be to God.

PASTOR: I have shared, through God's grace, in bringing some through the water of new creation into birth into the Body of Christ by Holy Baptism. Here is water, which symbolized God's gift of belonging in Christ.

(A vessel of water is given to a member of the congregation.)

PEOPLE: There is one Body and one Spirit. There is one Hope in God's call to us.

PASTOR: Prayer, both individual and corporate, is the means by which our relationship with God grows, deepens, and strengthens. Here is the Lutheran Book of Worship.

(Book is given to a member of the congregation.)

PEOPLE: Put your trust in God, "for I will yet give thanks to God, for the Help of his countenance." (Psalm 42:5)

PASTOR: Bread and Wine are the gifts of Creation and the means by which we receive the true Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Bread and wine are given to member of congregation.)

PASTOR & PEOPLE O God, you have bound us together for a time as pastor and people to work for the advancement of your kingdom in this place. We give you thanks for the ministry, which we have shared in these years now past.

Silence

We thank you for your patience with us despite our blindness and slowness of heart. We thank you for your forgiveness and mercy in the face of our many failures.

Silence

Especially we thank you for your never failing presence with us through these years, and for the deeper knowledge of you and of each other which we have attained.

Silence

We thank you for those who have been joined to this part of Christ's family through baptism. We thank you for opening our hearts and minds again and again to your Word, and for feeding us abundantly with the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of your Son.

Silence

Now, we pray, be with our pastor (and family) who leave and with us who remain in this place, and grant that all of us, by drawing nearer to you, may always be close to each other in the communion of saints.
All this we ask for the sake of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

PASTOR: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

PEOPLE: And also with you.

Appendix 4

Thanksgiving for shared ministry with the ROSTERED MINISTER and COUNCIL

This thanksgiving for shared ministry should be confidential and should be conducted by the bishop or his representative.

To congregational council and then to the rostered minister:

1. What are the gifts that you have seen in one another? What do you give thanks for from each other's ministry?
2. What has been accomplished together in these years of service?
3. What are our prayers for one another?

Appendix 5

SAMPLE LETTER TO ACCOMPANY LEADERSHIP NEEDS SURVEY

(on Church Letterhead)

Date

Dear Confirmed Members:

Enclosed with this letter is a survey we are asking every confirmed member of our congregation to complete and return to the church office within 10 days of the date of this letter.

Please carefully follow these instructions:

- 1) Select the 10 **lowest** priorities
- 2) Select the 10 **highest** priorities
- 3) You should have 6 mid-priorities left.

We will compile your responses and report the results to you as soon as possible.

The call committee will use this information to aid in their search for a rostered minister.

Forms received after the ten-day period will not be able to be a part of this survey.

Sincerely yours,

Congregation Council (Vice) Chair

Top	Middle	Bottom		Top	Middle	Bottom			
_____	_____	_____	Worship	plan and conduct effective worship service	_____	_____	_____	Youth Leader	teach, work, and relate well with high school & college age persons
_____	_____	_____	Social Ministry	enable persons to become aware of social needs and to participate in social service.	_____	_____	_____	Evangelism	visiting persons in the community and prospective members
_____	_____	_____	Administrator	oversee effectively the affairs of the organization and work with staff, committees, etc.	_____	_____	_____	Planner	map out objectives, plan overall organizational strategy, and design programs.
_____	_____	_____	Teach Children	teach and relate to preschool and elementary age children	_____	_____	_____	Teach Adults	teach and lead adults in faith development
_____	_____	_____	Music and Art	enjoy and use music and the arts within the church	_____	_____	_____	Inter-Personal Climate	exhibit and inspire a spirit of community
_____	_____	_____	Community Work	represent the church and motivate persons to cooperate in community activities	_____	_____	_____	Recruit and Equip Leaders	enlist, equip, and motivate leaders to carry out the work of the organization.
_____	_____	_____	Ecumenical Work	stimulate cooperation in local interchurch programs	_____	_____	_____	Visitor	support and nurture persons by visiting with them in their homes and places of employment.
_____	_____	_____	Stewardship	inspire and motivate persons in developing and using individual, group resources in the service of the church	_____	_____	_____	Preacher	proclaim the gospel so as to meet the needs of worshippers.
_____	_____	_____	Minister in Crisis	support persons in the midst of crises.	_____	_____	_____	Counselor	assist persons facing problems or decisions.

Interpreter of
Theology

communicate a
comprehensive understanding
of the Bible and Christian
theology.

Innovator

envision and implement new
approaches, activities, and
projects.

Utilize Conflict

analyze and utilize conflict
situations to strengthen
community life

Writer

write or edit materials for
publication

Share
Leadership

work mutually with superiors,
subordinates, and peers in a
staff situation

Public
Speaker

speak effectively before groups to
inform, motivate, and entertain.

Denominational
Participant

provide leadership to
programs

beyond the congregation

Financial
Management

work with accounts, figures, and
budgets.

Leadership Needs Survey

Please indicate what you understand are the six most important leadership needs relative to this staff position for the future:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Appendix 6



Pulpit Supply Service

REMUNERATION SCHEDULE

Virginia Synod Council recommends the following schedule as
remuneration for pulpit supply services

Honorarium: **One Service** **\$150.00 - \$250.00**
Each additional service..... \$50.00

Mileage: Round-trip mileage reimbursed at the current IRS rate.

Appendix 7

Steps to create your Ministry Site Profile

1. The congregation is required to create an account, through the ELCA Community log in, in order to open the Ministry Site Profile (MSP) form and begin work. (see step 9)
2. The MSP is a web-based form. Please save your work frequently as you proceed.
3. When you have completed your MSP, and before you submit it to the Mobility Database System (MDS which is the ELCA), you are encouraged to use the “Download PDF” option to view and review your work. Save a copy of the PDF to your computer. When all is complete and ready, click “Submit.” Once you submit your MSP the congregation can make changes, but it will take at least 24 hours for the changes to be reflected in the system.
4. The email used for the congregations log in and your Call Process Administrator, Virginia Synod Office of the Bishop, will receive an email confirming that the MSP has been received.
5. The MSP does not become active in the system, however, until your synodical bishop approves the MSP and allows it to be posted.
6. Once it is approved and posted any rostered minister who is searching for a call will be able to view your congregation’s MSP.
7. You can go to “Account Access/Ministry Status” on the website to monitor the status of your MSP. This page also has downloadable copies of the two supporting forms (the Seven Reflections and Reference Recommendation forms).
8. If you wish to update the information on your MSP, go to “Account Access” to edit the existing MSP and re-submit it. This process can take up to 24 hours for the changes to be reflected in the system.
9. If your ministry site has more than one opening to be filled by a rostered minister, you must complete an additional MSP to describe this second position and then submit it.
10. Ready? You may [click here](https://webapps.elca.org/call/Login.aspx), (https://webapps.elca.org/call/Login.aspx), to initiate or access the MSP and supporting forms.

Appendix 8

CALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

CONGREGATION _____

ADDRESS _____

<u>Names of Members</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>E-Mail</u>	<u>Home Phone</u>	<u>Office Phone</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

CHAIR _____

SECRETARY _____

Please email or mail to the call process coordinator after the Call Committee is named:

Rebecca Walls: walls@vasynod.org or Virginia Synod, PO Box 70, Salem, VA 24153

Appendix 9

ORDER FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A CALL COMMITTEE

P The following people have been appointed by the Congregational [Council] to serve as members of the Call Committee of _____ Church. We give thanks for their willingness to serve in this significant ministry of the congregation. In baptism we are welcomed into the body of Christ and called to share in the mission of God; we now rejoice that these sisters and brothers will serve in the common life and mutual mission of _____ Church.

As your names are announced, please come forward to be installed in your office as members of the Call Committee:

The names are read. The officers of the call committee may be named at this time also.

*(When those whose names are called have come forward, the
Order of Installation continues as follows:)*

A reading from First Corinthians: There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1 Cor. 12:4-7)

Dear Friends in Christ: You have been called to a shared position of leadership and trust in this congregation.

You are to be mindful that your mutual actions and deliberations within this household of faith bear witness to God, who gathers us together within the whole church.

You are to be conscientious in your service, so that the mission of Christ is carried out within this congregation and in its witness to the wider church, in the community, and in the whole world.

You are admonished that your deliberations as a Committee are to be held in strict confidence, and are not to be discussed or shared beyond your meeting, mindful of the sacred trust that is given to you.

You may, from time to time, share a progress report of your work with the Congregational Council and the general membership of the congregation as you deem it to be appropriate.

You are to be faithful in this specific area of service, consistent with the guidelines of the Upper Susquehanna Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, so that the Holy Spirit who empowers you may be glorified.

Finally, you are to be examples of faith active in love, fostering peace, harmony, and mutual understanding in this congregation.

On behalf of your fellow members, sisters and brothers in Christ, I ask you:
Will you accept and faithfully carry out the duties and responsibilities of the Committee on which you have agreed to serve?

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

(The congregation stands, and the Committee members face the assembly as the Pastor continues:)

P: People of God, I ask you:

Will you support these, the chosen members of your Call Committee, and will you share in the mutual ministry that Christ has given to all who are baptized in his name?

Congregation: We will, and we ask God to help us.

(Those being installed turn to face the Pastor who continues:)

P I now declare you installed as members of the Call Committee of _____ Church. Almighty God bless you, and direct your days and your deeds in peace (+), that you may be faithful servants of Christ.

C: AMEN

(Worship continues with the Prayers of Intercession, including petitions for the newly installed Committee members. They return to their places as the Peace is shared among the people following the prayers.)

Appendix 10

KEEPING THE CONGREGATION INFORMED

Our Synod Office's Call Process Coordinator is _____

Our Interim/Vice Pastor is _____

Phone-Office _____ Phone-Home _____

Email: _____

Church: _____

We are working on the Ministry Site Profile Form. Coordinator: _____

Our Call Committee:

The Chairperson of our CALL COMMITTEE is _____

Our committee is working.

Our Congregation Council nominates _____ to be our next pastor/deacon.

We will MEET pastor /deacon _____ at _____

Set for: _____

We Will VOTE on this Nomination in a Congregational Meeting set for:

Date: _____ Time: _____

We have issued a CALL to pastor/deacon: _____

Pastor/deacon _____ has accepted Our CALL and will begin service

Date: _____

We will have a SERVICE OF WORSHIP AND INSTALLATION:

Date: _____ Time: _____ Presiding _____

Appendix 11

CALL COMMITTEE MEETING REPORT TO CALL PROCESS COORDINATOR

It is important for the call process coordinator, Rebecca Walls, to remain in contact with you. Weekly contact Rebecca Walls and provide any updates using this form as a guide. You can contact her by email at walls@vasynod.org or simply call 540-389-1000, Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. You may also mail this form (address at the bottom of the form) or fax to 540-389-5962.

_____	_____	_____
Congregation	City	Date

At this meeting we:

() Requested Bishop's office to clear these names of prospective rostered ministers:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

() Reviewed mobility forms of the following rostered ministers:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

() Arranged to visit the following rostered ministers on these dates:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

() Reported on visits to prospective rostered ministers:

_____	Summary of visit: _____

_____	Summary of visit: _____

() Voted to reject further consideration of these rostered ministers, phoned and wrote them of this, with copy to bishop:

_____	_____
Rostered Minister	Rostered Minister
_____	_____
Reason for rejection	Reason for rejection
_____	_____

() Voted to invite this rostered minister and spouse to meet with entire Call Committee on this date:

_____	_____
Name	Date

() Voted to recommend this rostered minister to Council and scheduled meeting on this date:

_____	_____
Name	Date

() Received report of Council's endorsement:

Informal meeting of council with rostered minister and spouse will be held _____
Date

Congregational meeting to vote on a Call will be held _____
Date

() Other business we transacted: _____

() We have the following requests of the Bishop's office: _____

Note: Make additional photocopies of this report. Mail a copy of this report, after each meeting to:

Rebecca Walls
Virginia Synod, ELCA
P.O. Box 70
Salem, VA 24153-0070

Appendix 12

BOUNDARY TRAINING WORKSHOPS

In the 1992 development of the ELCA's *Strategy for Responding to Sexual Abuse in the Church*, synods were entrusted to adopt and implement policies and protocols for dealing with clergy sexual misconduct. The Virginia Synod Council originally adopted the "Statement of Policy Regarding Sexual Misconduct by Members of the Clergy and Associates in Ministry," in October 2000. In 2014 Synod Council began the detailed process of reviewing and revising this policy. At its January 2015 meeting, the Council adopted an expectation that **every rostered minister in this synod would participate in boundary training**. As such, the synod made the commitment to provide this training to all of its active rostered ministers in ministry, and retired clergy serving as interim pastors, or actively participating in the life of the church through regular pulpit supply, teaching, traveling on mission trips or youth gatherings, or providing other leadership oversight.

As part of its efforts to curb the devastating effects of sexual misconduct, the ELCA asked synods to provide boundary training workshops on a regular basis, and to verify rostered ministers' participation. As part of this request, the Virginia Synod Council further established a requirement that sets forth an expectation for every rostered minister to attend a boundary training every three years. In addition to recording registration and attendance via an Excel document, the synod verifies attendance by issuing a certificate of completion to all participants who attend a synod sponsored workshop in its entirety, and places a paper copy of that electronic certificate in ministry files upon faithful completion of the training. Attendance at training events sponsored by organizations other than the Virginia Synod must be verified in writing through similar certificates and/or letters; copies are placed in individual ministry files.

Both candidates and congregations are strongly encouraged to read the revised "Statement of Policy and Protocol Regarding Sexual Misconduct by Rostered Ministers" adopted by Synod Council in March 2015. In that document your specific attention is called to the section on **Adequate Preparation** found on page five. Congregations/parishes seeking rostered ministers for called positions can verify candidates' boundary training status by contacting:

Eastern Office of the Bishop
Lenae Osmondson
1301 Colley Avenue
Norfolk, Virginia 23517
Phone: 757-622-9421
Email: osmondson@vasynod.org

Appendix 13

HELPFUL TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE VIDEO CONFERENCING

Whether you're a total pro with Skype or Zoom calls, or have never taken part in a video conference before, these tips can help you prepare to put your best foot forward on your next video conference call.

If the call committee chair is interested in setting up a Zoom Video Conference call for a first interview with a potential candidate, the call process coordinator can help facilitate this. The call committee chair may contact Rebecca Walls at the Office of the Bishop at 540-389-1000 or by email at walls@vasynod.org

1. **Make sure you have a stable internet connection.** The most important aspect of video conferencing is a stable and fast internet connection. If the connection is slow, it will affect the conference with visual disruptions and inconsistent audio. Making sure you're seated nearby your internet router if conferencing in on a laptop, or that your hardware connection is secure are both great ways to prevent a poor connection from interfering with your meeting.
2. **Be sure to take time to introduce everyone.** While some programs will have on screen names available during the entire meeting, some do not and so it's important to take a moment to greet one another. It helps allow folks who might be new learn names and put them to faces.
3. **Sit close to the screen, your face should fill most of it.** It's a big help for others conferencing in to be able to see your face clearly, so when you are speaking and sharing ideas they can be better understood.
4. **Use an external microphone/headset, and headphones.** Most built in microphones on devices can do the job, but an external microphone or headset can go above and beyond helping to be sure you are heard clearly when you speak. Wearing a pair of headphones can help you better hear those you're meeting with as well.
5. **When you're not talking, hit the mute button on yourself.** When you are muted, it allows everyone in the meeting the opportunity to clearly hear who is speaking and what they have to say, and it will provide you the platform to clearly share your ideas when it's your turn to speak.
6. **Maintain appropriate behavior for a meeting.** Do not eat during the meeting, do not dress inappropriately. Basically, if you wouldn't do it during an in person meeting, don't do it during a video conferencing meeting!
7. **Stay engaged.** When you're on mute during an audio call, you have the ability to do whatever you want. But when you're on mute on a video call, it's important to stay truly engaged. Nod your head. Focus on the screen. Take notes. Participate in active listening, don't get up for a cup of coffee.
8. **Don't sit with a window behind you.** This will make your background look incredibly bright while your body and facial features will be hidden in shadow. Adjust where you sit so that the lighting will allow you to be clearly visible this goes a very long way to make sure your presence on camera is clear.
9. **When you're talking, spend some time looking at the camera, not the screen.** You'll appear more earnest and honest this way, and it will feel to those listening like you are speaking directly to them, rather than looking elsewhere.
10. **When you're talking, it's okay to speak slowly and at a reasonable volume.** Taking the time to make sure you are heard in volume and tempo is important. You don't want to have to stop and repeat yourself just because you were too quite or spoke too quickly.

Appendix 14

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS A CALL COMMITTEE MIGHT ASK A CANDIDATE

1. Tell us about your faith.
2. Tell us how you became a pastor or deacon.
3. What do you feel are your top five gifts for ministry? What are your growth areas?
4. How do you see laypeople and the pastor or deacon working together in ministry?
5. What are your feelings about inclusivity and welcome, as they relate to the life of the whole congregation?
6. How would you help us involve people of all ages in church activities?
7. Describe your preaching style. What things do you emphasize in your preaching?
8. Tell us about your worship style. Are you interested in experimenting with different services?
9. How do you feel about pastoral visiting? Crisis visiting?
10. What are thoughts on Learning Ministry?
11. What is your concept of Stewardship? Evangelism? Social Ministry?
12. How do you work with the congregation council?
13. How do you use committees?
14. What do you think about fund-raising activities?
15. (If you are married,) how do you see your spouse's role in the congregation?
16. Are you current in Boundary Training? When is the last time you attended a workshop, and do you have a certificate of completion or letter verifying such? If not within the last three years, what are your plans for meeting the requirements in our synod, as outlined by Synod Council in its "Statement of Policy and Protocol Regarding Sexual Misconduct by Rostered Ministers"?

Appendix 15

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS A CANDIDATE MIGHT ASK THE CALL COMMITTEE

1. Why am I of particular interest to you?
2. What has been the most significant event in the life of this congregation since you have been a member? (This helps you discover what is significant to them; it also helps you see what the congregation considers significant.)
3. Aside from the upheaval of looking for a new rostered minister, what has been the most upsetting event in the life of this congregation?
4. In your opinion, what areas of concern need to be addressed by this congregation?
5. What kinds of things did your former rostered minister do particularly well?
6. What were the circumstances surrounding your former rostered minister's departure? (If the former rostered minister died in office, you may want to re-phrase this question being sensitive to their need to mourn their departure.)
7. In what areas did you wish your former rostered minister(s) had more expertise?
8. What formal and informal methods of support have you used in the past to help your rostered minister become a better minister?
9. How should your rostered minister spend their time? In the course of a week, how much time should be spent in prayer? Personal study? Sermon preparation? Administration? Individual and family counseling? Visiting? With their family?
10. What organizations in the congregation are the most active and/or successful?
11. Beyond calling a rostered minister, what is the highest congregational priority for the next twelve months?
12. What goals have you established for the future? What methods can be used to achieve these goals?
13. What plans have you made for the expansion of staff or building?
14. How stable is this congregation financially?
15. What programs have you planned to implement in the next ten years?

Appendix 16

SAMPLE UNDER CONSIDERATION LETTER FROM CALL COMMITTEE

(on Church Letterhead)

Date

Name of Candidate (The Reverend/Deacon _____)

Street Address

City and State

Zip Code

Dear Reverend/Deacon _____:

On behalf of the call committee, I want to thank you (and spouse's name) for visiting with us as a beginning step toward consideration of a call to Church. We were pleased with the openness and depth of our conversation.

If it is agreeable with you, we would like to leave your name on our call list with the understanding that we are still in the process of deciding on a primary candidate. We will continue to keep you informed of our progress.

Please feel free to call me any time if you have questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

(Name), Chair
Call Committee

cc: Bishop

SAMPLE DENIAL LETTER FROM CALL COMMITTEE

(on Church Letterhead)

Date

Name of Candidate (The Reverend/Deacon _____)

Street Address

City and State

Zip Code

Dear Reverend/Deacon _____:

On behalf of the Call Committee, I want to thank you and (spouse name) for interviewing with us in a first step consideration of a call to the ministry at _____ Church.

The Committee has met and reviewed our impressions of the visit and discussions. We recognize apparent differences in pastoral style from that for which we are searching, and have concluded that we should not continue discussions toward a call.

This confirms our telephone conversation of _____.

We send our best wishes to you (and your family).

Sincerely,

(Name), Chair
Call Committee

cc: Bishop

Content Substitutions for Sample Letter

Option 2 for Paragraph No. 2

This committee has met and reviewed our impressions of the visit and discussions. We recognize that our desires and direction of ministry at (Name) church are different from the desires and directions that you feel are important. We have concluded that we should not continue discussions toward a call.

Option 3 for Paragraph No. 3

The committee has met and reviewed our impressions of the visit and discussions. We recognize that our financial capabilities are inadequate to provide a salary package that would be commensurate with your needs. We have concluded that we should not continue discussions toward a call.

STEPS TO COMPLETE:

Definition of Compensation, Benefits, and Responsibilities of the Pastor



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

FIRST LINE: Prepared by _____ (Name and address of congregation)

SECOND LINE: for the Reverend _____ (Name of pastor)

THIRD LINE: for the period: (Duration—normally for one year, with annual review)

A. COMPENSATION

LINE A.1.: List the base cash salary.

LINE A.2.: List the dollar amount of housing allowance beyond base salary. Designation of the percentage and amount of salary devoted to housing allowance must be done in an annual resolution of the congregation council's minutes. The individual pastor is finally responsible for any tax implications of the housing allowance.

Compensation does not include every expense or benefit connected with a particular ministry.

LINE A.3.: List dollar amount of any payment allowance (if provided) for "Self-employed Social Security."

LINE A.4.: If a parsonage or other housing is provided, consider costs of a utilities allowance (if provided) or other allowances (if any).

B. PENSION AND OTHER BENEFITS

The Pension and Other Benefits Program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was established to provide the pastor with retirement, disability, survivor, and medical-dental coverage.

LINE B.1.: Indicate the percentage of contribution on the basis of the defined compensation of the pastor (salary and housing). The percentage is based on current requirements of the plan and the policy of the synod for Letters of Call.

LINE B.2.: Sponsorship will include medical-dental coverage (where applicable) for the pastor's spouse and children unless they have other employer-provided group medical insurance and the pastor consents to waiving medical-dental coverage under the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.

LINE B.3.: List amounts of other insurance or benefits, if any, to be provided to the pastor, beyond those that are part of the pension and benefits contributions made by the congregation for the types of coverage provided under the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program (retirement, disability, survivor, and medical-dental coverage).

C. EXPENSES

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

- LINE C.1.:* Automobile expenses may be covered by a specified total annual amount or on an actual recorded mileage basis.
Other travel allowance provisions would be noted here as well.
- LINE C.2.:* Indicate amount (if any) to be provided for other professional expenses, such as an allowance for theological books and periodicals.
- LINE C.3.:* Coverage of expenses for official meetings of the synod is required.
- LINE C.4.:* Indicate amount provided for continuing education.
- LINE C.5.:* List other items and amounts to be provided for them.
- LINE C.6.:* For pastor accepting a call, define arrangements and reimbursements for moving expenses. Moving expenses normally are paid in full by the calling congregation.

D. AGREEMENT

- LINE D.1.:* Enter vacation time. Normally four weeks per year encompassing four Sundays is provided.
- LINE D.2.:* Enter time for continuing education. Minimum recommendation is indicated on the form.
- LINE D.3.:* Provision must be made for the "First-Call Theological Education Program" for recent seminary graduates.
- LINE D.4.:* This provides a reminder of the congregation's commitment to the care exercised by a Mutual Ministry Committee (C13.04. in the *Model Constitution for Congregations*).
- LINE D.5.:* Disability leave provisions are coordinated with the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program and with Social Security.
- a. Up to two months of continued salary, housing, and contributions to the pension program in a 12-month period are to be provided by the congregation.
 - b. Provision may be made for further unpaid time for disability recovery as agreed by the congregation, but with the stipulation that unused accumulated sick leave will not be compensated at the end of the call.
- LINE D.6.:* Where applicable, maternity/paternity or adoptive leave is noted.

E. OTHER PROVISIONS

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

F. OTHER MATTERS

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

SIGNATURES

Normally, the president or vice president of the congregation signs and dates the document.

When accepting the agreement, the pastor signs and dates the document.

Definition of Compensation, Benefits, And Responsibilities for Ministers of Word and Sacrament Under Call

Prepared by _____

for the Reverend _____

for the period: _____ to _____

A. COMPENSATION

The congregation will provide the following annual compensation:

1. Base Cash Salary \$ _____
2. Housing Allowance (*if provided*) \$ _____
3. Self-employed Social Security payment allowance (*if provided*) \$ _____
4. If a parsonage or other housing is provided:
 - a. Utilities allowance \$ _____
 - b. Furnishings allowance \$ _____
 - c. Housing equity allowance \$ _____

B. PENSION AND OTHER BENEFITS

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

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

1. ELCA Pension at _____ % of defined compensation
2. ELCA Medical-and-Dental Insurance (*check one below*):
 a. Member only c. Member and children e. Coverage waived
 b. Member and spouse d. Member, spouse, and children
3. Other insurance or benefits: _____ \$ _____
_____ \$ _____

C. EXPENSES

The congregation will provide for the following expenses related to this pastor's ministry.

1. Automobile and travel allowance \$ _____
2. Other professional expenses \$ _____
3. Expenses for official meetings of the synod, as reimbursed
4. Continuing education (*\$1,000 recommended; minimum \$700 from calling source*) \$ _____
5. Other (_____) \$ _____
6. Pay the moving expenses to this field of service as follows: _____

D. AGREEMENT

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

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

<or the following may be completed>

E. OTHER PROVISIONS

Special emphases of the pastor and special encouragement by the congregation:

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

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____
- (d) _____
- (e) _____

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

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____
- (d) _____
- (e) _____

F. OTHER MATTERS

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

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

Congregation President

Council Secretary

Date: _____

I certify that I accept the above statement:

The Reverend _____ Date of signature: _____

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

STEPS TO COMPLETE:

*Definition of Compensation,
Benefits, and Responsibilities of
the Minister of Word and Service*



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

FIRST LINE: Prepared by _____ (Name and address of congregation)

SECOND LINE: for _____ (Name of rostered minister)

THIRD LINE: for the period: _____ (Duration—normally for one year, with annual review)

A. COMPENSATION

LINE A.1.: List the total annual cash salary.

B. PENSION AND OTHER BENEFITS

The Pension and Other Benefits Program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was established to provide church workers with retirement, disability, survivor, and medical-dental coverage.

LINE B.1.: Indicate the percentage of contribution on the basis of the defined compensation for the rostered minister. The percentage is based on current requirements of the plan and the policy of the synod for Letters of Call.

LINE B.2.: Sponsorship will include medical-dental coverage (where applicable) for the spouse and children unless they have other employer-provided group medical insurance and the person under call consents to waiving medical-dental coverage under the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.

LINE B.3.: List amounts of other insurance or benefits to be provided to the person under call, beyond those that are part of the pension and benefits contributions made by the congregation for the coverages provided under the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program (retirement, disability, survivor, and medical-dental coverage).

C. EXPENSES

Expenses are *NOT* part of the rostered minister's compensation. Rather, these items represent payment of costs related to the carrying out of this responsibility.

LINE C.1.: Automobile expenses may be covered by a specified total annual amount or on an actual recorded mileage basis.

Other travel allowance provisions would be noted here as well.

LINE C.2.: Indicate amount (if any) to be provided for other professional expenses.

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

LINE C.4.: Indicate amount provided for continuing education.

(Revised February 2017)

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

LINE C.6.: For a person accepting a Letter of Call, define arrangements and reimbursements for moving expenses. Moving expenses normally are paid in full by the calling congregation.

D. AGREEMENT

LINE D.1.: Enter vacation time. Consult the synod's guidelines for ministers of Word and Service under call.

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

LINE D.3.: Provision must be made for the "First-Call Theological Education Program," where applicable.

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

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

- a. Up to two months of continued salary and contributions to the pension program in a 12-month period are to be provided by the congregation.
- b. Provision may be made for further unpaid time for disability recovery as agreed by the congregation, but with the stipulation that unused accumulated sick leave will not be compensated at the end of the call.

LINE D.6.: Where applicable, maternity/paternity or adoptive leave is noted.

E. OTHER PROVISIONS

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

F. OTHER MATTERS

Additional detail may be inserted here related to the broader responsibilities that a rostered minister may carry in the life of the church.

SIGNATURES

Normally, the president or vice president of the congregation signs and dates the document.

When accepting the agreement, the rostered minister signs and dates the document.

(Revised February 2017)

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

Prepared by _____

for _____

for the period _____ to _____

A. COMPENSATION

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

B. PENSION AND OTHER BENEFITS

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

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

1. ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program:

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

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

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

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

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

C. EXPENSES

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

1. Automobile and travel allowance \$ _____

2. Other professional expenses \$ _____

3. Expenses for official meetings of the synod

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

5. Other (_____) \$ _____

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

D. AGREEMENT

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

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

E. OTHER PROVISIONS

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

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

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

F. OTHER MATTERS

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

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

Rostered Minister

Congregation President

Date

Date

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

Appendix 19

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING FOR THE CONDUCT OF CALL OF A PASTOR

1. Church Constitutional Statement: According to C9.01 of the Approved Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, "Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of members present and voting at a meeting regularly called for that purpose.

The lay president or vice-president should have available:

- a. a copy of the constitution of the congregation, noting especially the sections that pertain to special meetings of the congregation, quorum, eligible votes (Chapter 10, THE CONGREGATION, of the Approved Constitution for Congregations) and call of a pastor (Chapter 9, THE PASTOR);
 - b. a copy of the notice of the meeting that has been given to the members;
 - c. a report on the nominee;
 - d. ballots
2. The agenda should include:
 - a. Prayer
 - b. Reading the purpose of the meeting from the notice
 - c. Reading portion of the Constitution pertaining to eligible voters
 - d. Ascertainment of a quorum
 - e. Presentation of the resolution of nomination by the secretary of the church council
 - f. Report on the nominee by chair of the call committee
 - g. Discussion, concluding with prayer
 - h. Appointment of tellers and distribution of ballots
 - i. Vote by secret ballot - YES in favor of nominee, NO if opposed
 - j. Report of the tellers
 - k. If a two-thirds majority to call was received, the pastor is declared elected
 - l. Vote on financial/benefits package - voice vote; majority required
 - m. Closing prayer

If the congregation votes to call a pastor, please have the official ELCA Call forms filled out, signed and mailed to the called pastor for their signature.

When the signed call form is received back from the rostered minister, send a copy to the call process coordinator, keep a copy in the congregation and send the original back to the rostered minister.

The pastor-elect would appreciate a telephone call with information on the results of the meeting.

Send to me a report on the division of votes cast and a general evaluation of the meeting.

Thank you for your help.

Bishop

Sample Council Resolution for the Call of a Pastor

BE IT RESOLVED, that the congregation council of _____

Lutheran Church in _____, recommend to the congregation that the Reverend _____ be called as Pastor of this congregation, at a special congregational meeting to be held

_____ at _____ a.m./p.m.

Include Bio of pastor and full compensation description.

Sample Resolution to be Voted Upon at the Congregational Meeting

BE IT RESOLVED, that The Reverend _____ be called as Pastor of _____ Lutheran Church in _____.

Appendix 20

SAMPLE SCRIPT FOR CONGREGATIONAL MEETING TO CALL A ROSTERED MINISTER

Council President Calls the meeting to order.

We begin with prayer. The Lord be with you. (*And also with you.*) Let us pray. Loving God, you call us to labor in your vineyard, and without you we can do nothing. Grant us your gracious presence at this meeting, that what we do will build up your Church. As we consider the call of a new pastor, let your Holy Spirit govern and direct our deliberations and decisions, that we may please you in all that we say and do; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The constitution of this congregation states that the presence of _____ voting members constitutes a quorum, and I determine that a quorum is present.

The constitution also stipulates that only two items of business may be conducted at this meeting. The first is Council's recommendation regarding the call of a (*TITLE*), and the second is Council's recommendation regarding compensation.

The first vote is conducted by secret, written ballot and a 2/3 majority of the votes cast is necessary to elect. The second vote regarding compensation may be voted on by voice vote or show of hands. A simple majority is required to approve the compensation package. Absentee or proxy votes cannot be accepted for either matter.

The first motion presented by Council is that we elect the *Reverend/Deacon (NAME)* to be our (*TITLE*). Is there a second? (*Wait for someone to second.*) It has been moved and seconded that (*CONGREGATION*) Lutheran Church call the (*TITLE NAME*) to serve as our next (*TITLE*).

_____ will present the rationale of the call committee and council in making this recommendation.

(After committee or council rep offers rationale.)

Thank you. The floor is now open for discussion of the motion to call (*NAME*) as (*TITLE*). (Those wishing to speak, please wait till I call on you and someone brings you the wireless mic so we can all hear you.)

Give time for all comments and questions.

Are you ready to vote? Tellers, please distribute the ballots. Please mark either Yes or No on the ballot. A Yes vote is to call (*NAME*). A No vote is not to call (*NAME*).

Give time for members to complete their ballots.

Tellers, please collect and tally the ballots and report the results to me.

(Should we sing a hymn while waiting for the tellers to tally the ballots? If so, ELW 576, "We All Are One in Mission" would be a good choice.)

The tellers' report should be in this form:

A. Number of ballots cast: _____

B. Number of invalid ballots: _____

(Valid means that the member wrote either Yes or No or some other words whose plain meaning is that we should or should not call the primary candidate. Anything else – a vote for any other name written in is an illegible ballot, etc. is an invalid ballot.)

C. Number of valid ballots: _____ (A minus B)

D. Votes required to elect: _____ (2/3 or .667 times C.)

E. Number of yes votes: _____

F. Number of no votes: _____

If E is equal to or greater than D, announce that (NAME) has been elected. Then move on to the recommendation regarding compensation.

If E is less than D, announce that the call fails and that completes the business for the day. Go in peace.

If the primary candidate is elected:

The second recommendation is to approve the compensation package Council offered to the primary candidate. The information was included with the letter from the council and the primary candidate's bio. Is there a second? *(Wait for someone to second.)* It should be noted that the amounts in this package are in line with the amounts in the congregation's (YEAR) Spending Plan. The floor is now open for discussion. (Once again, I ask that you wait till I call on you and someone brings you the wireless mic so we can all hear you.)

Give time for all comments and questions. Members can offer amendments, and each amendment (if seconded) would have to be voted on before returning to the main motion. Discussion at that point would be limited to the amendment, until all have spoken and a vote is taken, and the amendment either passes or fails. If it passes, it then alters council's recommendation. If it fails, the recommendation as submitted by Council is still before the congregation and has to be voted on.

After all who wish to have spoken:

Are you ready to vote? All those in favor of the compensation package as recommended (or as amended) please say "Aye." Those opposed by "No."

If it is not close, you can announce that the Ayes have it and the motion is adopted.

If it is or appears to be too close for you to call, ask those in favor to raise their hands. Then ask those opposed to raise their hands. If that satisfies you that one side has enough votes, announce the results.

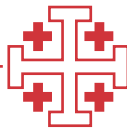
*If it is **still** too close to call, ask people to raise their hands and keep them up until the tellers have an opportunity to count. Ayes first, then no's. Tellers report the count and you announce the results.*

If the compensation package is not approved, the call fails. Announce this and end the meeting.

If it is approved, our business today is complete.

The results of these votes will be shared immediately with *(NAME)*, who has thirty days to respond. It is imperative that their candidacy and the results of our meeting today **REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL** until such time as we are able to make a public announcement.

There being no further business to come before us today, I declare the meeting adjourned. Thank you for your attendance and participation. Please hold *(NAME)* in prayer as they considers their response to this call. Go in peace. Serve the Lord. *Thanks be to God!*



LETTER OF CALL

TO A MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

*In the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

**With prayers for the guidance of the Holy Spirit
to do God's will,**

**a congregation of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, meeting on**

extends to you this call to serve as

We call you to exercise among us the ministry of Word and Sacrament which God has established and which the Holy Spirit empowers: To preach and teach the Word of God in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions; to administer Holy Baptism and Holy Communion; to lead us in worship; to proclaim the forgiveness of sins; to provide pastoral care; to speak for justice on behalf of the poor and oppressed; to encourage persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel; to impart knowledge of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its wider ministry; to endeavor to increase support given to our congregation to the work of our whole church; to equip us for witness and service; and guide us in proclaiming God's love through word and deed.

In accepting this call, you hereby promise to fulfill this pastoral ministry in accord with the standards and policies for ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Therefore, be diligent in the study of Holy Scripture, in use of the means of grace, in prayer, in faithful service and in holy living.

Specific responsibilities, compensation, benefits, and conditions of this call are contained in a document related to this call. With this call, we pledge our prayers, love, esteem, and personal support for the sake of the ministry entrusted to you by God and for our ministry together in Christ's name.

In testimony of this call, we have subscribed our names on behalf of the congregation on this day of

President

Secretary

Attested by _____

Bishop of the

Date of Bishop signing