



EMBRACING TRANSITION

TRANSITION AND CALL PROCESS MANUAL

Pacifica Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

August 2017

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

May God richly bless you as your congregation embarks on a journey of hope, trust, and wonder. I pledge to hold you in prayer during this time of transition to the day you issue a call for your next rostered minister, be that a pastor or a deacon. I have witnessed how God uses such times to help congregations see the Holy Spirit at work in their midst, helping them to claim their identity and grow more and more into the people Christ calls them to be for the sake of their community and world.

As your congregation begins this journey, I want to assure you that the Pacifica Synod Office of the Bishop is here to accompany you along the way. This is a significant time for the congregation, the synod, and the larger church. Entering the transition process intentionally and thoughtfully allows the Holy Spirit to move and breathe new life not only into the ministry and mission of your congregation, but the whole church.

Congregations that have been served by a rostered minister who has resigned, retired or accepted another call have sometimes been referred to as having a “vacancy.” While you may be experiencing a rostered minister vacancy, you are NOT experiencing a ministry vacancy. A congregation in transition undertakes a special kind of ministry: an opportunity to explore and celebrate its past, to strengthen and encourage leadership in the present, and discern a possible new vision for its future. You will be blessed with lay leaders and an intentional interim pastor (or your Senior Pastor in the case of calling additional staff) who will guide you through this process. I pray you will use this time wisely to follow God’s call in this new season of sharing Christ’s love with the community you have been placed in to serve.

This *Embracing Transition* book is offered to provide resources and help as you move through the necessary steps to call a rostered minister to serve with and among you. May God’s Holy Spirit inspire and bless and guide you during this journey of transformation.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andrew A. Taylor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Andrew" and the last name "Taylor" clearly legible.

The Rev. Dr. Andrew A. Taylor, Bishop
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Intentional Interim Minister

Congregation President

Chair of Transition Team

Chair of Call Committee

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A Few Biblical Passages Related to a Change of Leadership

As you read these passages think about:

What kind of leader each person was?

What gifts and talents did they bring as leaders?

How was change handled?

First Samuel 15 & 16

Saul's disobedience to the word of the Lord, and the Lord's choice of David as the new King.

First Kings 2:1-13

David's son Solomon becomes king at David's death.

Mark 3:31-35

"Whoever does the will of God is my brother, and sister, and mother." Jesus gives us a new perspective as to who is included in God's family.

Matthew 20:20-28

Servant Leadership

Philippians 4:1-7

Inclusive Leadership/Leadership support

Deuteronomy 34:9 / Joshua 1:11

Leadership changes from Moses to Joshua

Luke 16:10-17

Leadership defined as faithfulness

The Transition and Call Process in the Pacifica Synod

Congregations in transition are in a partnership with the Office of the Bishop, supporting one another and holding one another accountable to be who God is creating each to be: the Body of Christ. During a transition, the Office of the Bishop and the congregation work closely toward the goal of finding the right pastor for the next phase of the congregation's life.



Prayer:

Loving God, be with us and guide us during this time of discernment. Fill our leaders with your wisdom. Keep us mindful of the work you would have us do. Lead us and guide us, O God, so that we are empowered by your Spirit to continue the work of being in your kingdom here on earth as the search for a new rostered minister continues. Bless all who have taken on extra responsibilities, and fill them with a sense of your love and presence. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Office of the Bishop recommends that every congregation take advantage of the critical opportunity for renewal that is presented during a time of pastoral transition: This “in-between time” offers congregations a rare opportunity to reflect on ministry past, present, and future in unique ways. Entering the transition process intentionally and thoughtfully allows the Holy Spirit to move and breathe new life into the ministry of a congregation. A successful interim process not only prepares the way for the next chapter in a congregation's history, it also allows individuals and the community to practice healthy leave-taking, heal old wounds, and imagine creative ministry that can bless the wider community for future generations.

Led by the intentional interim minister (the Senior Minister in the case of adding staff) and the congregation council, everyday ministry continues during the transition process: weekly worship, educational opportunities, outreach to the community, and care of members. During this in-between time, the leadership of the congregation will find engaging ways to guide the faith community through a self-study that will embrace the past, name the present, and prayerfully discern God's call into the future. To do this, the whole community will need to communicate well and often so that everyone stays committed to moving forward in the process.

Glossary of Terms

Call Committee

The committee is appointed or elected, per the congregation's constitution for the purpose of searching for the next rostered minister to be called by the congregation. This committee works with the Ministry Site Profile (see below) based on the self-study of the congregation conducted by the transition team and affirmed by the church council. The committee is then charged with interviewing candidates for a rostered minister (pastor or deacon) to lead the congregation into the future. Candidates are first vetted by the Office of the Bishop and then given to the congregation until a suitable candidate is called.

Call Packet

Once the call committee has selected a candidate of choice; they present the candidate to the congregational council. The council notifies the Office of the Bishop. The council may use the samples contained in the *Embracing Transitions Manual* to determine appropriate compensation and call details.

Definition of Compensation and Benefits

The Definition of Compensation and Benefits Package reflects the actual financial impact on the congregation's budget of supporting the leader who has been called by the congregation. This includes salary, housing allowance, pension and health benefits, car allowance, continuing education and professional expenses, Social Security assistance, et al. It is helpful for candidates to have clarity as to what is available for them to cover living expenses, as well as the benefits that are not received directly, but paid on their behalf such as pension and health benefits. (see Forms)

Letter of Call Certificate

The Letter of Call is the official document, signed by the Bishop of the Pacifica Synod and the congregational officers, authorizing a pastor to serve in Word and Sacrament ministry or a deacon to serve in a Word and Service ministry at a congregation or specialized ministry setting. (see Forms)

Ministry Site Profile (MSP)

The Ministry Site Profile is a document compiled by the transition team which reflects congregational history, current structures and staffing patterns, hopes for the future, mission direction, demographic data about the community, and the gifts for leadership being sought by the congregation. The transition team is tasked with preparing the MSP based on the self-study of the congregation. (see Forms)

Office of the Bishop

The Office of the Bishop and its staff supports the work of the Bishop of the Pacifica Synod. See page 4 for contact information.

Rostered Minister

A person who is on one of the two Rosters of the ELCA: *Ministers of Word and Sacrament* (Pastors), or *Ministers of Word and Service* (Deacons). Rostered Ministers have completed theological training and been approved for serving through the candidacy process within the ELCA.

Rostered Minister Profile (RMP)

The Rostered Minister Profile is a form completed by rostered candidates. It includes questions about theology, gifts for ministry, personal information, employment and educational history and reference.

A Called Minister of Word and Sacrament (also referred to as “placed” or “settled” pastor)

This is the pastor selected by the Call Committee, recommended by the Congregational Council, and voted on by the congregation to be the newly installed pastor of the congregation.

A Called Minister of Word and Service (also referred to a “placed” or “settled” deacon)

This is the deacon selected by the Call Committee, recommended by the Congregational Council, and voted on by the congregation to be the newly installed deacon of the congregation.

Synod Representative

Every call process is a partnership among the congregation, the Office of the Bishop, and the whole Pacifica Synod. As we live into this partnership, we endeavor to have a representative from the Office of the Bishop present when congregational votes take place. The representative (Bishop, Assistant to the Bishop, or Conference Dean) will report back to the Office of the Bishop the results of the congregational vote. When a representative from the Office of the Bishop is unavailable, the president of the congregation will report the results of the congregational meeting and vote to the Office of the Bishop.

Transitional Pastoral Leadership

- **Intentional Interim Pastor:** A pastor who has specific training to guide congregations through the transition process due to a pastoral vacancy. An intentional interim is appointed by the Bishop to serve in a congregation and if appropriate are called or extended a contract by the Pacifica Synod Council.
- **Bridge Pastor:** A pastor who is called or has a contract to provide Word and Sacrament Ministry (i.e. preaching and worship leadership and providing pastoral care) on a short-term basis. This is most often prior to the arrival of an intentional interim or between the end of the intentional interim and the called pastor's arrival.
- **Pulpit Supply Pastor:** A pastor who is contracted on a short-term basis to provide Word and Sacrament ministry, usually preaching and leading worship.
- **Redevelopment Pastor:** A pastor who is specially trained with a specific set of skills to work with a specific congregation whose direction in mission and focus have changed due to changes in the context of the neighborhood. This pastor will be placed with assistance from the Office of the Bishop and consultation with the Director for Evangelical Mission

Transition Team

The transition team is appointed or elected, per the congregation's constitution for the purpose of developing a Ministry Site Profile. The Ministry Site Profile is based on the self-study of the congregation conducted by the transition team and affirmed by the church council.

Overview of Steps In the Transition & Call Process

- *Please refrain from establishing a Transition Team until the arrival of the Intentional Interim Pastor.*
- *Please refrain from establishing the Call Committee until the work of the transition team has been completed – including the Ministry Site Profile work.*

Part I – Our Rostered Minister is leaving. What do we do?

- When a rostered minister resigns, they submit a letter of resignation to the Church Council at a council meeting.
- Pray! Pray and continue praying for your rostered minister that is taking their leave, for the congregation, for God’s guidance as you lead during this special time in the life and mission of the congregation.
- The letter of resignation is copied and distributed to the office of the Bishop and to the congregation, along with a letter from the council accepting the resignation and detailing any plans being made for a farewell event (if known).
- The President of the congregational council contacts the Office of the Bishop to begin a closer relationship during the transition process.
- The rostered minister and council complete any obligations to one another (i.e. updating parochial records, completing any financial obligations between the minister and the congregation, etc.).
- The council clarifies the new relationship and expectations of the departing minister, completes the Letter of Agreement (Appendix 3), and notifies the congregation.
- An exit interview is scheduled between the minister and the Church Council.
- The congregation holds a farewell event for the minister.
- The Church Council consults with the Office of Bishop to arrange for pulpit supply (listed on the synod website), and/or a “Bridge Pastor” (if available) to fill the Sundays and needs of the congregation should there be a time-gap between the leave taking of the rostered minister and the arrival of the intentional interim.
- The Church Council sets a budget for the transition period, including the work of the Transition Team and the Call Committee. This may include: travel, meals, and housing if the Candidate of Choice is from another area.
- The Office of the Bishop is contacted to set up a meeting with the Bishop and/or an Assistant to the Bishop to discuss the transition and call process with the church council.
- The Church Council is responsible for
 - The completion of the Declaration of Intent of Mission Support (requested by the synod in December or January each year.)
 - The filling out and filing of the Annual Congregation (Parochial) Reports; usually due late winter/early spring each year.
 - The development of the compensation package for the next Rostered Minister as the Ministry Site Profile is being completed.

Part II – Transition Team, Intentional Interim and Self-Study

- Continue in prayer.
- Each member of the Church Council completes an Interim Ministry Assessment Form and submits it to the Office of the Bishop. (see Forms)
- All Intentional Interims are appointed by the Bishop.
- The Office of the Bishop will recommend the best available Intentional Interim Minister to the church council
- The Church Council interviews the Intentional Interim and agrees to be served by the Intentional Interim. The compensation package is agreed upon and signed by the Church Council, the Intentional Interim and the Bishop. The Pacifica Synod Council will either call, or contract with the Intentional Interim. (see sample in Forms)
- The Intentional Interim may begin her or his ministry upon recommendation from the Bishop, prior to the official vote of the Pacifica Synod Council.
- The Interim should be installed as soon as possible. (Appendix 7)
- The Transition Team will be selected per the congregation's constitution and by-laws to work with the Intentional Interim to lead the congregation through the transition and self-study process. If the constitution and by-laws do not address the interim ministry period and the transition team, the transition team will be appointed by the Church Council. The Transition Team may also be installed or commissioned by the Intentional Interim.
- The make-up of the Transition Team should include a (1) member of the Church Council.
- The Transition Team is equipped for their work of completing the Ministry Site Profile (MSP) by the Intentional Interim and Synod Staff as needed. The MSP is submitted to the Church Council for approval.
- The MSP is sent to the Pacifica Synod Office. The Office of the Bishop reviews the MSP prior to final approval.
- The Church Council oversees the election/selection/appointment of the Call Committee per the congregation's constitution.

Part III: The Call Committee

- The Call Committee is established with prayer per the congregation's constitution.
- A (1) member of the Transition Team and a (1) member of the Church Council should be part of the Call Committee. An odd number of members may also be helpful. A representative from the Office of the Bishop meets with the Transition Team, the Call Committee, and the Church Council. This meeting begins with all four entities (a four-way.) After the Church Council and Transition Team are excused, the meeting continues with the Call Committee.
- The Call Committee is reminded that their work is CONFIDENTIAL.
- The Call Committee familiarizes themselves with the Ministry Site Profile, sets meeting dates and times, reviews the questions they will ask and clarifies their decision-making process.
- The Office of the Bishop enters a time of intentional prayer and discernment to identify potential candidates to offer the Call Committee for interviews.
- The Assistant to the Bishop meets with the Call Committee for a "mock interview" and to bring Rostered Minister Profile(s) to the committee.
- The Call Committee receives the names of Candidates.
 - The Call Committee interviews Candidates [May include an initial interview by phone or skype, etc. As the process moves forward the Call Committee may travel to hear the Candidate preach (call committee only)].
 - The Call Committee should conduct each interview in the same manner with each candidate.
 - All Candidate names are to remain confidential and all materials shredded after the committee is through with them.
 - Each Candidate given to the Call Committee should be interviewed.
 - Candidates that the Call Committee is choosing **not** to move forward with should be notified by the Chair of the Call Committee via the telephone, followed by a thank you note for their time. The chair also notifies the Assistant to the Bishop of their decision.
- The Call Committee regularly updates the congregation without breaking confidentiality.
- When the Call Committee has a Candidate of Choice, that Candidate is recommended by the Call Committee to the Church Council.

Part IV: The Call Process / Church Council

- The Church Council
 - Advises the Office of Bishop that they have a Candidate of Choice.
 - Keeps in touch as they set dates for a congregational meeting.
 - The Executive Committee and Chair of Call Committee meet with Candidate of Choice.
 - Discuss the compensation package.
 - May provide an opportunity for a meet and greet with the congregation.
- The council votes to recommend both the candidate and a compensation package to the congregation. They set a congregational meeting date, per their constitution and by-law parameters.
- The call, including the compensation package is sent to the Office of the Bishop for review.
- At the congregational meeting
 - The congregation votes on whether to extend a call to the rostered minister (requiring a two-thirds majority).
 - If approved, the congregation votes on a second ballot on the compensation package (requiring a simple majority).
 - A representative from the Office of the Bishop is present, whenever possible, for the congregational vote.
- After the meeting, the representative (Bishop, Assistant to the Bishop, or Conference Dean) will report back to the Office of the Bishop the results of the congregational vote. When a representative from the Office of the Bishop is unavailable, the president of the congregation will report the results of the congregational meeting and vote to the Office of the Bishop.
 - If the vote is affirmative, the congregational president and secretary sign the definition of compensation and benefits document and forward it to the Office of the Bishop.
 - The President calls the candidate to inform them of the vote.
 - The Office of the Bishop sends the call documents to the candidate.
 - The candidate has 30 days to accept or decline the call.
 - The new pastor may be installed by the Bishop, Assistant to the Bishop, or the Conference Dean at an agreed-upon time. The time should allow for colleagues and laity from nearby congregations and the conference to participate.

Part V: The Interim Minister / Church Council

- The Intentional Interim prepares for closure with the congregation.
- The Congregational Council conducts an exit interview.
- A date concluding ministry together is set.
 - The possibility of a severance of one month should be considered to help the Intentional Interim in between calls.
- The Congregation leadership facilitates a proper and positive farewell for the Interim.

PAPERWORK FLOW CHART FOR CALL PROCESS

Church Council/Executive Committee receives a letter of resignation from the Pastor.

- a. Together, Pastor and Council (or Executive Team) decide how to notify the congregation.
- b. Church Council (Council President) contacts the Synod Office.
- c. A Transition/Call Process Manual is sent via email to the council president
- d. The Church Council reviews their responsibilities (Transition/Call Process Manual section I)
- e. A date is set for the church council to meet with the Assistant to the Bishop for mobility.
- f. An Interim Pastor is appointed by the Bishop to serve the congregation in consultation with the church council.

Interim Pastor arrives and is installed in the congregation.

- a. Interim Pastor consults with the Bishop and Assistant to the Bishop (if not already done.)

Church Council and Interim Pastor appoint/elect a transition team (per the congregation's constitution).

- a. Transition Team, Interim and Synod Staff meet
- b. Transition Team does the work of walking with the congregation to determine their ministry/mission/needs.
- c. Transition Team writes the Ministry Site Profile (MSP)
- d. Transition Team presents MSP to the Church Council for Approval
- e. Church Council gathers names of people to possibly serve on Call Committee.
- f. Church Council reviews budget for compensation package.

Church Council sets a congregation meeting to elect (appoint/select) Call Committee per Congregational Constitution.

Four-Way Meeting with Synod Office

- a. Church Council, Transition Team, Call Committee, and Synod meet to go over the Ministry Site Profile (MSP). Call Committee stays to meet with assistant to the Bishop for call process.

Call Committee

- a. Conducts mock interview with Assistant to the Bishop
- b. Receives names from the Synod Office
- c. Interviews candidates
- d. Selects Candidate of Choice (COC)

Call Committee takes name of Candidate of Choice (COC) to Church Council.

Church Council works out Compensation and other details with COC.

- a. Church Council Executive Committee and Chair of Call Committee meet with COC to go over compensation package.
- b. Send a copy of Compensation, Benefits and Responsibilities Form (including Appendix A) to Bishop ASAP so s/he can recommend any adjustments as needed before it goes to congregational vote.
- c. Council sets congregational meeting per their constitution with only 2 items on the agenda:
 1. Call of the Candidate of Choice
 2. The Compensation Package
- d. Council will advise Synod office of date for congregational meeting
 1. Synod will send a representative to meeting when possible.
 2. Bishop's office will send Letter of Call "Certificate" to be signed by Council President and Council Secretary following an affirmative vote.
- e. After congregation votes to Call with package
 1. If a Synod representative is unable to be present, Council will advise synod office of outcome of vote.
 2. Council should immediately call COC to advise them of outcome of the vote.
 3. Council will send the original Definition of Compensation, Benefits and Responsibilities, signed by the Council President and Council Secretary to the Synodical Bishop
 4. Council will send signed Letter of Call "Certificate" back to Synodical Bishop to attest.

Bishop will send the following to COC

- a. Letter
- b. Definition of Compensation, Benefits and Responsibilities to be signed by COC
- c. Addendum if needed
- d. Blue Acceptance of Call Form

Candidate of Choice (COC) will have up to 30 days to:

- a. Sign Definition of Compensation, Benefits and Responsibilities and make 2 copies (send 1 copy to congregation with a letter of acceptance. Send 2nd copy to Synodical Bishop; COC keeps original document)
- b. Send completed Blue Acceptance of Call Form back to the synod office.

A representative from the Bishop's office will present original Letter of Call "Certificate" at installation or if unable to attend, original will be mailed directly to the Pastor.

Congregational Council Checklist

Date	Action Item	Completed by	Notes
	Accept pastor's letter of resignation and notify the congregation in writing		
	Notify the Pacifica Synod Office		
	Schedule a farewell event for the pastor		
	Congregational Council and pastor fulfill all obligations		
	Council facilitates an internal review of Parochial Records		
	Certification of financial records and obligations between pastor and congregation		
	Clarify new relationship with departing pastor, complete Letter of Agreement, notify congregation		
	Conduct an exit interview with pastor and the Church Council		
	Meet with the Office of the Bishop to talk about transition (Please send a copy of church's current budget to synod office prior to this meeting)		
	Office of the Bishop will recommend an intentional interim pastor		
	Agree on recommended interim pastor and compensation package		
	Welcome interim pastor		
	Select and Install the Transition Team		
	Encourage the congregation to support the work of the Transition Team during the self-study		
	Ministry Site Profile completed		
	Elect/Appoint and install the Call Committee		
	Transition Team/ Call Committee/ Council meets with the Office of the Bishop		

	Call Committee confidentially receives names and interviews candidates for the call [skype, in person, sermon, etc.]		
	Call Committee selects a candidate to recommend to the congregation and notifies church council		
	Call Committee Chair, Council Executive Committee, and candidate discuss and agree on compensation package		
	Compensation package reviewed by Bishop		
	Set date for congregational vote per constitution and by-laws with written notice to members		
	Office of the Bishop is notified of the date of the Congregational Meeting for the vote		
	Contact the synod office with the results of the vote (if a synod staff or dean of conference is unable to be present)		
	Immediately call candidate with results of the congregational vote		
	Mail signed compensation of benefits documents to the Office of the Bishop. Bishop will forward call papers to candidate for their signature.		
	Receive acceptance/rejection of call from candidate (up to 30 days)		
	Upon acceptance of a call, contact synod office to set up a date/time for installation or Ordination/Consecration		
	Schedule Farewell for the Interim Pastor		
	Schedule a welcome for the new pastor.		

Part I

Church Council

Our pastor is leaving. What do we do?

1: Concluding the Partnership with your Rostered Minister

There are many reasons for a minister to leave a congregation: retirement, another call, or personal reasons. No matter the reason, there will be a period of adjustment for the congregation. Some members of the congregation might feel sad, abandoned, or betrayed, while others might feel relief or even joy at a minister's departure. From all places on the emotional spectrum, there will be some who want to move ahead quickly, often ignoring the emotional work that is critical in transition time. Congregation members must be allowed to process their feelings to prepare for the next rostered minister. Processing emotions takes time and should not be minimized. Transitions are an opportunity to develop new ways of being that offer revitalization. Saying good-bye well can pave the way for a healthy new relationship.

Congregations are not alone during these times of transition. The Office of the Bishop is always in partnership with congregations and ministers, and will walk even more closely with congregations during pastoral transitions. As one minister is leaving and the congregation prepares to welcome a new minister into the future ministry, the Office of the Bishop offers specific and constitutionally-mandated recommendations for congregations. The relationship among the Office of the Bishop, the congregation, and the minister is a partnership where each one holds the other accountable to be who God is creating us to be: the body of Christ.

2: Consultation with the Office of the Bishop

- The current outgoing minister indicates to the Bishop and to the congregational council that s/he will be leaving. (If the minister is going to "On Leave from Call" status, they must send a formal written letter to the Synod Council.)
- The council president contacts the Office of the Bishop of the Pacifica Synod to begin the transition process and sets up a meeting with the Congregational Council. A representative

of the Office of the Bishop visits with the Council to answer questions, to get to know the unique context, ministries, mission and needs of the congregation .This helps to build a stronger partnership with the congregation.

- The council president schedules an exit interview with the Church Council and exiting minister.

3: Congregation Council Accepts the Pastor's Letter of Resignation

- When a minister resigns, the congregational council shall receive the letter of resignation at a called meeting of the council. The date of departure should also be reflected in the minutes of the congregational council. The minister then notifies the congregation by means of a letter to all the membership.
- The congregational council or president shall communicate with all members of the congregation regarding the minister's resignation. The announcement should be made orally and in writing. An appropriate action would be a letter to all the members of the congregation, which includes:
 1. Notice that the congregational council has accepted the minister's letter of resignation;
 2. The last date the minister will serve the congregation and any plans for a farewell event;
 3. Expressions of gratitude to the minister and his or her family;
- The council president schedules an exit interview with the departing minister. The exit interview will usually be with the exiting minister and church council or executive committee. An exit interview (Appendix 2) is an intentional conversation whose purposes are:
 1. To evaluate the ministry;
 2. To identify areas of potential growth for the minister and the congregation;
 3. To celebrate the ministry;
 4. To articulate appropriate boundaries and establish a covenant of behavior between the pastor and the congregation for the future health and well-being of the congregation. (Appendix 3, 4)

4: Complete All Obligations

- **Portico Benefits:** The president and treasurer ensure that an End of Call form is completed to cease billing from Portico. The document can be found at www.porticobenefits.org. The congregation is responsible for the pension and benefits until this document is completed. The exiting minister must complete a Change of Call form to inform Portico where to mail upcoming invoices.
- **Parsonage:** If there is a parsonage, consider scheduling a walk-through with the current minister to plan for the resolution of any issues identified in the walk-through.
- **Future correspondence:** Obtain a forwarding address, phone number, and e-mail address to forward any mail that the minister may receive and to mail anything that is not completed by the time of departure. Please send this information to the Office of the Bishop as well.
- **Receive the Parochial Reports and financial records:** Upon the minister's departure, the secretary of the congregation council will meet with the departing minister to review and receive parochial reports and financial records. The parochial reports of each congregation should be kept in a separate book and will remain the property of the congregation. The secretary addresses and completes the Certificate of Church Records and Certification and Completion of Financial Records (see Forms).
- **Settle financial accounts with the departing Minister:** A congregation under financial obligations to its former minister must make satisfactory settlement of the obligation before calling another rostered minister. Such financial obligations may include loans on housing, grants, vacation pay, etc.
- In the same manner, any financial obligations of the minister to the congregation must also be satisfied.

5: Saying Farewell to Your Pastor

Because a resignation signals the end of an important covenantal relationship, it is common for congregation members to experience feelings of grief, sadness, anger, anxiety, etc. To help the congregation move through this experience, the council should arrange a farewell event (or events) for the exiting minister and his or her family. You may consider using a Service of Thanksgiving and Farewell in the final worship service. (Appendix 5)

The congregation council should plan appropriate expressions of appreciation for the resigning minister and his or her family. This may take several forms, such as:

- A service and/or reception which may include invitations to conference pastors, pastoral colleagues, deacons, synod staff, and community leaders
- A seated dinner or an informal potluck dinner
- A farewell gift

A special committee may be appointed to plan the event(s) and coordinate all congregational expressions of appreciation.

6: Planning for Transition

While the congregation is preparing for the final weeks of the current minister's call, the congregational council works with the Office of the Bishop to plan for the transition process. The first question to consider is the viability of the congregation. All leadership should ask themselves whether this congregation has the financial and human resources to continue in full time ministry. (A copy of the church's budget should be shared with the synod office at this time.) If a congregation's viability is in doubt, significant conversation should take place between the Office of the Bishop and the congregational leadership.

If there are major outstanding debts or financial obligations, the holder of that debt may also need to be included in deciding an appropriate plan to move forward. The standard in the Pacifica Synod is that congregations will work with the office of the Bishop to have an Intentional Interim Pastor. In consultation with the Office of the Bishop, in certain circumstances, it may be determined that an Intentional Interim Pastor is not feasible. In those cases, other options will be discussed.

Things to remember

A. Every context is different

If the intentional interim process is appropriate for the congregation, the Office of the Bishop will provide a potential candidate to the congregational council. The council then interviews the candidate. The council negotiates a time frame and compensation package with the interim minister. In intentional interim situations, the Pacifica Synod Council issues a call or contract to the interim.

It is the practice of the Pacifica Synod that Intentional Interim Pastors are compensated according to the latest edition of the Synod's Compensation and Guidelines.

(Compensation Guidelines at <http://www.pacificasynod.org/for-leaders/clergy-compensation-guidelines>)

While waiting for an interim pastor, the council can invite a **supply pastor** to conduct worship and provide pastoral care (a list of supply pastors is available through the office of the Bishop, your conference dean, and on the synod website). Or the Office of the Bishop may suggest a **Bridge Pastor**.

Because this time is so crucial in the life of the congregation, a Bridge Pastor or long-term supply pastor may be the appropriate option when the future of the congregation is uncertain, or under other special circumstances.

Preparing for the Interim Time (Appendix 6)

B. Everyone needs to know his or her role

- **Remember, God is in charge!**
- **Office of the Bishop:** Responsible for holding you in prayer throughout the whole transition process, articulating the purpose of the intentional interim process, providing resources as needed to assist you and providing appropriate and qualified candidates to the call committee.
- **Interim Pastor:** Responsible for leading the ongoing ministry of the congregation, providing pastoral care, leading worship and administering the sacraments, and assisting in the transition process.
- **Congregational Leadership:** Responsible for supporting and leading the congregation in its ongoing ministry and providing prayerful support and encouragement to the transition team and call committee.
- **Congregation:** Responsible for supporting its ongoing ministries: baptisms, worship, faith formation, service, sacraments, stewardship, and relationship with the wider church. Also, responsible for holding the transition team and the call committee in prayer.
- **Outgoing Minister:** Responsible for maintaining professional distance from the congregation once they have departed by not contacting the congregation or its members and not getting involved in their work and ministry.
- **Future Minister:** Responsible for prayerfully discerning God's call.

C. Theological Context for Transitional Ministry

A congregation in transition is shaped by the uniqueness of its individual context. Yet the Word of God transcends every context, moving and bringing forth what the congregation may need.

Transitional ministry – whether through a supply pastor, a bridge pastor, or an intentional interim – finds its theological grounding within the Holy Scriptures. Consider the transitional ministries of some of the Bible’s greatest leaders who encountered change in their context: Moses, Abraham and Sarah, and Deborah in the book of Judges. And that’s just in the Hebrew Scriptures. We can turn to the New Testament and find even more biblical and theological grounding for transitional ministry. After all, isn’t transitional ministry all about transformation? The Apostle Paul was transformed and became a transformational leader. There was John the Baptist, and, of course, Jesus. From death to resurrection, Scripture points us to change and transformation.

History tells us that every congregation and every ministry is limited by time and scope.

For Moses, part of his life and ministry were spent wandering in the wilderness. Congregations in transition enter this wilderness experience immediately upon learning that there is going to be a pastoral shift in their leadership.

Margaret Morris and Joan Mabon, pioneering intentional interim pastors and trainers, have written in the Interim Ministry Network newsletter, [The In-Between Times](#):

“Perhaps more than any other, the biblical motif ‘wilderness’ emerges most strongly as the metaphor for a congregation between installed pastors. ‘Wilderness’ is that place of sudden freedom, uncertain leadership, changed relationships, possible deprivation – temptations, hopes and disappointments. That place where all old fears reappear most threateningly... but where all the hopeful futures take on new promise. ‘Wilderness’ becomes a paradigm for the interim [transition] time.”

As far as biblical precedent goes, John the Baptist just might be considered the first ever transitional minister. He is a model for intentional interim pastors. All transitional pastors strive to be the voice in the midst of the wilderness for any congregation in transition. John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus. The transitional minister prepares the way (i.e., the

congregation) for the coming of the new called minister, or another new direction the congregation will decide to take. John prepared the way for the new day, and transitional ministers do the same thing.

Intentional interim ministers work specifically within the congregational context, lifting a mirror to reflect to the congregation the culture within its own walls. The transition time led by the transitional pastor is one where the congregation does the work, preparing themselves to receive the newly called pastor.

A transitional minister, no matter what kind, works to work themselves out of a job. In John 3:30, John the Baptist points to the one who was called by God to take up ministry among the people: "He must increase, but I must decrease." John the Baptist passed his ministry on to Jesus. Jesus, in turn, traveled throughout the countryside and into the villages and cities, constantly preparing his disciples to succeed him. The work of any congregation flows from the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, in, with, and through the will of God. Hence, transitional ministry in a congregation centers, first and foremost, on God.

D. The Work of the Transition Time: Other Tasks for the Church Council

Church Council and other leadership [as directed by the Church Council] will also attend to the following details, with the help of the Intentional Interim Pastor:

- Update the current congregational constitution
- Study the congregation and the surrounding community
- Establish and/or affirm core values
- Develop and/or affirm mission statement
- Affirm vision statement
- Review staffing needs and concerns and update job descriptions
- Review policies and procedures
- Assess the congregation's financial reality
- Assess the congregation's stewardship of resources
- Assess the congregation's structural and property issues

Part II

Transition Team

Intentional Interim and Study

1: Intentional Interim Begins

Litany of Beginning for Interim Ministry (Appendix 7)

2: Self-Study: Encountering God in our Midst

A. The Purpose of the Transition Time

The purpose of the transition time is to mobilize, discover and generate the capacity to thrive anew.

- The two major goals are
 1. To discover a new and deepened sense of identity and purpose for the congregation and
 2. To establish a healthy relationship with the next ministerial leader who will walk with the congregation toward the renewed sense of purpose.

The Transition Team allows the Congregational Council to focus on continuing to support the ministries of the congregation and the regular business of the church.

Other purposes of the transition time are:

- To help congregational members grieve after the loss of their minister and to gain perspective on the chapter of congregational life that has now ended.
- To gather the feelings and ideas of both members of the congregation and people living in the surrounding community about their church.
- To provide a forum for sharing and focusing hopes and aspirations for the future.
- To help the congregation move from a preoccupation with the past to a state of readiness for a new chapter in its life under the leadership of a new minister.
- To involve the congregation in accomplishing the developmental tasks of the intentional interim period.

The members of the Transition Team commit to the unique opportunity presented in the transition time. It is a time of high challenges for any congregation, a time for self-assessment, and a time for visioning and recommitment to mission and ministry. The overall goal is to bring the congregation into a state of readiness to move forward under the leadership of a new minister.

B. Forming a Transition Team

The Holy Spirit is on the move in a congregation in transition. Four to eight weeks following the arrival of the intentional interim pastor, it is recommended that a Transition Team be created. This committee will be responsible for research, analysis, documentation, and study. The Transition Committee will be appointed by the Congregational Council or the Congregation (per your Constitution and Bylaws). The intentional interim minister will help guide you through this process using a variety of tools. The five to seven individuals on the Transition Team (the size of the team should vary with the size of the congregation) work closely with the intentional interim minister to plan and guide a process that invites the whole congregation into a time of self-reflection, preparing the congregation for a new future with a new called minister.

In his book Dry Bones Breathe (1978), Robert Worley writes: “Members activate themselves. Leaders cannot activate others. They can model behaviors appropriate for church members to lead charismatically.” How does this apply to the church council? transition team?

A transition team must:

- Value each team member’s contributions and take suggestions and ideas seriously.
- Listen.
- Become acquainted with resources for gathering and evaluating information.
- Hold and honor confidentiality.
- Foster the trust of the church membership.
- Gather the information needed to create a congregational vision, establish goals, and define activities for the future ministry of the church.
- Collate and interpret information gathered from the congregation and its life and vision of the future.

C. The Work of the Transition Time: The Five Focus Areas

The Intentional Interim will work with the congregation to focus on **five central focus areas**:

- Heritage:** Reviewing how the congregation has been shaped and formed
- Coming to Terms with History

- Leadership:** Reviewing the membership needs and its ways of organizing and developing new and effective leadership
 - Dealing with Shifts of Power and Leadership Changes
- Mission:** Defining and redefining sense of purpose and direction
 - Discovering a New Identity
- Connections:** Discovering all the relationships a faith community builds outside of itself
 - Rethinking Denominational Linkages
- Future:** Developing congregational and ministerial profiles
 - Commitment to New Leadership and to a New Future

Also, the congregation asks:

- Who Are We:
- Who Are Our Neighbors?
- What is God Calling Us to Do?

While interim ministers will often do the things installed ministers do, such as preaching, teaching, and visiting, their focus during the transition time between installed pastors is on what are called the Five Developmental Tasks. These include: **Acknowledging the importance of congregational history**, so that their shared heritage can be appreciated, while at the same time be aware of the issues and concerns that need to be resolved in order to move freely into the future. **Discovering their identity** is the task of understanding “who we are now in our present context and what it is we understand God is calling us to be.” It is the task of developing the vision to which a congregation is being called. In most congregations over a period of time the leadership begins to take on much of the style and values of the previous minister. When that minister leaves, there is often a time when persons who have been in leadership rethink their commitment and determine whether or not they want to continue in leadership positions. Other persons often find the interim time an opportunity to take leadership roles. This is an opportune time to empower those who are out of power and to welcome leadership gifts from all parts of the congregation. It is also a time to confront “informal leadership” or special interest groups. In **Rethinking Denominational Linkages** congregations often are not aware of the support and resources they receive from their synod and churchwide offices. That relationship is normally more visible while the structures of the church beyond the congregation are engaged in working with the congregation in moving through the interim period and seeking to find the right minister to call. The transition time helps raise the awareness of a congregation to its denominational heritage, ministries, and resources. While **Committing to New Leadership** and to a **New Future** a congregation begins to develop a shared vision of its future and has sought to call a minister to help lead it in moving into that future, there will probably be a new commitment both to that new leader and to that new future.

D. Helpful Documents for the work of the Transition Team

- Review of the Congregation's History (Appendix 8)
- Review of the Congregation's Constitution and Policies (Appendix 9)
- Development / Review of Core Values, Mission Statement and Vision Statement (Appendix 10)
- A Review of Staffing Needs and Resources (Appendix 11)
- Intentional Stewardship (Appendix 12)
- Stewardship of Property Inventory (Appendix 13)

3: Ministry Site Profile

When considering the calling of a new minister, the congregation should know its challenges and opportunities for mission and ministry so that the gifts of the minister meet the needs of the congregation. The work of the transition team during the interim time is critical to this process. The Ministry Site Profile (MSP) provides the opportunity for the transition team to articulate an accurate picture of the congregation. It is important that the profile be a thorough and honest reflection of the community, the congregation, and the congregation's mission. (Appendix 19)

After the congregation, through the work of the Church Council and Transition Team, has spent time in self-study, collecting data, updating and working with the interim minister to address any issues in the infrastructure of the congregation, the Transition Team will use this information as it works to complete the Ministry Site Profile. (see Forms)

The MSP can be accessed online at www.elca.org/call-process. Gathering information to include in the MSP must be the work of the whole congregation, but the transition team is advised to choose one person to input data into the document to maintain consistency of voice. As the transition team completes the MSP, it is important for committee members to be in consultation with the congregation council, strategic planning team, and/or other lay leaders. Be sure to save your work frequently! It is recommended that the person who completes this document use the "Save As" button on the last page of the document to keep a remote copy on his or her personal computer for updating as needed.

After all sections are complete, the MSP is given to the congregation council to affirm. The Council and Interim Minister may decide to share the MSP with the congregation at large to make certain there is agreement on the congregation's mission and the gifts needed in a new rostered leader. The Church Council then sends it to the office of the bishop for review.

Once the MSP has been uploaded to the ELCA’s Call Portal, a synod staff person will review the profile and contact the church council, transition team, and call committee to set a date for a 4-way meeting for conversation and review before the profile is activated. Any outstanding issues will be addressed at this meeting prior to activating the MSP.

Additionally, the Call Committee will meet with the Assistant to the Bishop immediately following the 4-way for orientation. The congregation secretary should download and print a final copy of the profile for congregational record-keeping. Once the MSP is submitted electronically, the ELCA Churchwide Office will inform the synodical Office that they have received the document. After all issues are resolved on the MSP, it will be activated and shared with potential candidates.

Please record the email and password used for your Ministry Site Profile!

Email: _____

Password: _____

4: Report from the Transition Time

The Ministry Site Profile

The ministry site profile is prayerfully used by the call committee as they seek a new pastor for the congregation that comes with the gifts for leading the congregation in the missions and ministries they have identified during this time of self-study.

Part III

Call Committee

The Call Process

1: Time of Intentional Prayer and Discernment

During the entire transition time, the Office of the Bishop holds the congregation and its leadership in prayer. Because transitions are critical opportunities for healthy and vital growth, everyone needs to be open to where the Holy Spirit might be leading the community of faith. As soon as a transition is identified, prayer and discernment begin around possible future leadership.

2: Establishing a Call Committee

A. Purpose of a Call Committee

The purpose of the call committee is to identify the candidate who is best suited to lead the congregation into God's future. The work of the committee must be done prayerfully, and the people on the committee must be open to the movement of the Holy Spirit. The call committee is not looking for a clone of the former minister(s), nor the exact opposite, or an innocuous person to *hire*; rather they are looking for the "right" candidate to *call* at this particular time and place for this particular congregation. (Appendix 18)

B. Make-up of the Call Committee

The council should begin by reviewing the congregation's constitution to determine the structure and make-up of the call committee and the process by which its members will be selected. Sometimes, members of a call committee come with a predetermined mindset about the next minister. It is important for the committee to understand that each individual has his or her own bias, and to challenge each member to see beyond his or her own wants toward the greater good. Encourage people to open their hearts to the Holy Spirit moving within the call committee for the sake of the congregation's mission and vision. (Appendix 14)

The number of people on the committee can vary, but no more than 5 to 7 people is generally a good size, depending on the size of the congregation. The committee should reflect the diversity of the congregation. Pay attention to age, gender, length of time as a member, levels of involvement, and attendance at worship. It is recommended that one person from the council and one member from the transition team serve on the call committee. If not indicated by the constitution, the committee selects its own chairperson. The Congregational Council should share the name of the committee chair and its members with the Office of the Bishop.

C. Contact the Office of the Bishop

Once the call committee is formed, contact the Office of the Bishop, or a representative of the Office of the Bishop, to meet with the transition team, the call committee and church council to discuss the process.

D. Announcement of Call Committee Members

The names of the call committee members should be made public via your newsletter and bulletin. It is also appropriate to post pictures of the committee with the contact information in visible locations, and to request prayers and support for the call committee.

E. Installation of Call Committee

The work of the call committee is critical to the health and future well-being of the congregation. Installing the members to the call committee in a worship service and publicly blessing their work is encouraged. Ask the congregation to pray for the people who will serve in this ministry. (Appendix 15)

F. Expenses of the Call Committee

Authorized expenses of the call committee should be paid for by the congregation. These may include:

- Opportunities for community building
- Administrative costs
- Hospitality during the interviewing of candidates
- Travel expenses as needed

G. Getting started with the Call Committee

One of the benefits and responsibilities of the committee is to build relationships with each other. Take time to learn what gifts and skills each member brings to the work of calling a pastor. Because of the cross-section of people on the committee, it is likely that each will learn something about the other and his or her ministry. It is imperative that the call committee digest and take seriously the Ministry Site Profile from the transition team.

H. Meetings

Frequency of meeting depends on the committee members and their schedules. Meeting once every two weeks is a good baseline to consider, though some committees meet every week. Set an appropriate time to prevent frustration and unnecessary delays.

Each meeting should begin with devotions and prayer. (Appendix 16, 17) Devotions should be intentional, not rushed. Inviting God into the conversation and opening one's ears to hear God's invitation are vital components to this process.

3: Overview of the Interview Process

A. Basic Process Outline

All candidates being invited into the Pacifica Synod will be vetted and cleared by the Synod Bishop, including any name raised from within the congregation from personal contacts. Once the Ministry Site Profile has been officially submitted, the Office of the Bishop will take 4-6 weeks to gather and find the best candidates for your congregation. Below is an outline of appropriate protocol to follow once these names have been officially offered to the call committee:

1. The Assistant to the Bishop will meet with the call committee. At that meeting, there will be a review of the call committee's agreed upon process, confidentiality and a "mock interview." The AttB will also bring the rostered minister profile(s).
2. Each committee member is assigned a number. The Rostered Minister Profiles are numbered accordingly. This allows the chairperson to keep track of the RMPs and make sure that they are collected and shredded once the committee is finished with them.
3. The chairperson, or designee, will contact each candidate within a week of receiving the names to let them know that their Rostered Minister Profile has been received. This call is the first step in getting to know the candidate.
4. The committee will have an initial interview (usually by Skype, "Go to Meeting" or phone) with each candidate. This initial interview usually lasts an hour or more.
5. After the initial interview, the committee can release any candidate who does not seem like an appropriate fit for the congregation. Once released, the candidate may not be reconsidered.
6. When a candidate is released, the chairperson will contact the candidate by phone to let them know the committee's decision and follow up with a note thanking them for their time.
7. The committee can invite any appropriate candidate(s) for an additional Skype interview or a face-to-face meeting to engage in further conversation and discernment.

Some ideas for this time together might include:

- Tour of the broader community
- Sharing a meal
- Tour of ministry site
- Speaking with a realtor about potential housing opportunities

B. Confidentiality

For the integrity of the process and out of respect for the candidate, it is critical that everyone involved must agree to maintain and respect confidentiality during the interview process. Prematurely divulging information about the consideration of a candidate may jeopardize the ministry of a pastor or sow division within a congregation. Conversations during the call process should remain confidential to the official meetings of the call committee. Committee meetings (and interviews) are not open to those who are not on the call committee.

C. Communications by the Call Committee to the Congregation

Names of candidates must remain confidential, but the call committee should otherwise regularly communicate to the congregation in general terms about its progress in the call process. It is wise to name one person on the call committee as the “communicator” or “spokesperson.” This person would be tasked with communicating with the congregation on a regular basis; making them aware of the committee’s hard work. Also, encouraging continuing prayer for the committee and the entire congregation during the call process.

D. Preparing to interview Candidates

Before the interviewing begins, the call committee needs to meet, perhaps several times, to study carefully the oral and written information about each candidate given by the Office of the Bishop. It is the expectation that the call committee will interview all of the candidates provided to them. The Office of the Bishop has initially vetted each candidate and shared their information after prayer, discernment, and conversation. The call committee is encouraged to review its commitment to trust each other, share openly and maintain confidentiality at this time. Whenever the call committee chooses to no longer consider a candidate, all materials related to that candidate should be shredded.

Information packets may be prepared and sent to each candidate prior to his or her interview. Suggested items to include in the packet are: a recent annual report, worship bulletins, newsletters, a listing of staff, a list of congregation council members and call committee members, a picture of the call committee, and the congregation’s constitution and mission statement. If you have a local Chamber of Commerce, you may ask it to provide

an introductory packet of information about the community to include in this mailing. This packet should be shared with candidates coming for in-person interviews.

Written communication verifying the agenda and length of the interviewing process should be sent prior to the meeting. If the candidate has a spouse, the call committee needs to be clear about whether the spouse is invited to accompany the pastor to visit the congregation and community. It is generally highly recommended that the spouse be invited to come along. However, the spouse does not typically participate in the interview. Because the decision to accept a call impacts the entire family, it is important that the spouse be able to see the church and parsonage (if there is one) and have a chance to ask any questions s/he might have.

The advance communication should contain travel instructions to reach the interview site and indicate the commitment of the congregation to provide reimbursement for all expenses. If a spouse is invited to accompany the candidate, the committee should indicate whether or not they will also cover all expenses for the spouse. A prompt reimbursement of the candidate for expenses incurred should follow the interview.

E. Hearing Candidates Preach

If desired, call committee members may travel to a candidate's current congregation to hear them preach. They should, however, request permission from the pastor ahead of time. Please ensure that this visit is kept confidential so that people in the pastor's congregation do not recognize you as a call committee! If such a visit is not possible, the call committee may ask for audio and/or video recordings of the pastor's preaching. They may also arrange for the pastor to preach at another congregation in the vicinity (not at their own) so that committee members may hear them preach there. Please contact the Office of the Bishop to help make these arrangements.

4: The Interview Process

A. Initial Phone/Skype Interview

The initial phone or Skype interview is a brief opportunity for candidates and committee members to get to know one another. The committee should pick 4 to 5 questions to ask each candidate. Remember, consistency in questions between multiple candidates will be helpful. The main goal of this conversation is to make introductions and get a general feeling for each candidate. The interview should occur with equipment that allows all members of the call committee to be visible and to interact with the candidate. Examples of questions for this initial interview include:

- Tell us about yourself and your life of faith.
- Why are you an ELCA minister?
- Tell us about what gives you life in parish ministry.
- Who have been the most influential people in your life?
- What excites you about our congregation?
- What would you like to know about us?

Try to come up with questions which will help you determine which candidates you want to invite for face-to-face interviews and which you want to release. It is good to invite as many strong, viable candidates as you can for a face-to-face interview, although cost may prohibit the committee from inviting more than one or two.

B. Preparing for the Face-to-Face Interview

The Ministry Site Profile, together with the other items you have previously mailed to the candidate, will give the candidate an initial impression of the congregation.

When the plan is to interview more than one candidate, an attempt is made to conduct each interview in the same setting and manner. For example, if the call committee meets with one candidate in a restaurant, the same pattern should be followed with any subsequent candidates. The call committee should be consistent in having the same person lead the interview each time and plan for committee members to ask the same basic questions of each candidate. This will ensure that all the bases are covered in each instance once the interview process begins.

The leadership needs which have been identified on the Ministry Site Profile should be used to form an outline for the interview. The committee will create approximately eight to ten detailed questions based on this outline. The committee should also be flexible and understand that a give-and-take conversation will not necessarily allow you to ask the questions in a predictable order. (Appendix 19)

A crucial aspect of interviewing is the art of listening.

To be a good listener, several elements are important:

INTEREST: The person being interviewed has invested time and effort to be with you, and is worthy of the committee's undivided attention and respect.

BODY LANGUAGE: Committee members can set the candidate at ease by their own relaxed body language, which conveys open non-defensive atmosphere.

PATIENCE: The interviewer gives the person time to formulate thoughtful answers.

LINKING: Building on what the person has said, the interviewer asks questions that pick up on information already shared in the interview. This indicates that you are thoughtfully listening.

ALERTNESS: To be certain that the interviewee is understood by all committee members. The interviewer remains alert for the use of key words and phrases that are important to the congregation's ministry and mission.

CONCENTRATION: The interviewer listens for main ideas, not just facts and figures. They should ask themselves, "What is this person telling us?"

CLARIFYING QUESTIONS: Interviewers ask clarifying questions to make certain they really understand what the person is saying. If a response is not clear, the committee should ask for it to be clarified. Doing so does not reflect ignorance but demonstrates that the committee is truly interested and trying to understand what the person is attempting to communicate.

DELIBERATION: Committee members should guard against coming to a hasty decision about a candidate. Thorough dialogue with other committee members and listening to all candidates are essential when making a final decision.

C. Preparing for the In-Person Visit

1. Set up dates and times for interviews, tours, and other activities, taking into account any differences in time zone that may affect the candidate's schedule.
2. Arrange for travel, lodging (hotel/motel), and meals.
3. If the candidate is flying, provide a car so s/he can look around on their own.
4. Determine which call committee members will initially meet and welcome the candidate.
5. Show the candidate (and their spouse, if applicable) around the area and provide periods of unstructured time for them to decompress away from the call committee.
6. Provide and accompany the candidate to meals.
7. Escort the candidate to the interview with the call committee.
8. Ensure that many different call committee members have a chance to interact informally with the candidate. For example, the person who provides transportation should be different from the people with whom the candidate shares meals.

Remember

- All expenses are covered by the congregation.
- The spouse, if present for the visit, should not participate in the actual interview. All other activities should be planned with the spouse included.
- Give the candidates an anticipated timeline so they know who to expect to contact them and where.
- Give written materials to each candidate about the congregation.

D. Conducting the Formal Interview

The call committee should designate one member to host the candidate at the interview site. If the member is not accompanying the candidate to the interview, be certain that they are on-hand well before the candidate's anticipated arrival at the interview location.

The committee member chosen to direct the interview should outline the anticipated interview procedure for the candidate and indicate the time allotted for the interview; remember to include time for the candidate to ask questions of the call committee. The candidate should be briefed on the "question and answer" format and alerted that they will have a chance to ask questions of the call committee. The lead interviewer is responsible for keeping the interview within the time allotted. Have all members of the call committee briefly introduce themselves to the candidate again, identifying his or her vocation and role played in the congregation. It may be helpful to have the candidate begin the interview with a brief devotional or Bible study and prayer, but if you choose to do this, be sure they are aware of this long before they arrive!

Before the committee begins asking the interview questions, it is appropriate for the committee chairperson to ask the candidate to briefly tell the committee something about themselves (this should take no more than five to seven minutes). After this, the formal questioning may begin. Questions may be assigned to various members of the call committee, assuring that all members are actively participating. Don't hesitate to ask follow-up or clarifying questions if an answer is unclear to all members. Remember, the interview is intended to be a dialogue, not an inquisition! Just as the committee members are discerning the candidate's viability for the congregation, so is the candidate discerning whether the congregation is a good fit.

One committee member may be designated to take notes on the candidate's responses during the interview for later review by the committee. Note-taking should be done as unobtrusively as possible and the lead interviewer should alert the candidate beforehand that notes will be taken. Some committees might consider recording the interview, but recording should only take place with the candidate's consent and with the assurance of strict confidentiality.

Avoid asking questions which can be answered with a simple yes or no. For example, the questioner should not ask, "Do you think you are effective in your ministry to youth?" The candidate will almost surely answer, "Yes." Ask instead, "Tell us about your approach to ministry with youth," or "Give us some examples of how you have worked effectively with youth in your present or former parish." (Appendix 20)

In concluding the interview, the candidate may be invited to answer any questions not asked or make any other comments. (Appendix 21) The candidate should be thanked for coming and encouraged to be in phone contact with a designated member of the call committee if any additional questions arise. The call committee should indicate the approximate time table involved in the completion of the congregation's call process. If possible, after the interview, the committee should reimburse the candidate for any expenses incurred, such as travel costs, overnight accommodations, and meals. If the reimbursement cannot occur at the time of the interview, it should be completed within the following week and an appropriate explanation given to the candidate.

E. After the Interview

As soon as possible, within one week of the interview, the call committee should meet to share initial impressions. It is important that these shared impressions are recorded for later reference.

As the committee engages in the process of selecting one candidate to recommend to the congregation council, it will be important to do several things:

- Pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Clarify understanding of what it means for the committee to reach a consensus. We strongly discourage the committee from voting on candidates. The best practice is for prayer, conversation, and discernment to continue until consensus can be reached. A united front is the most effective way to communicate to the congregation why this person has been selected.
- Allow ample time for each committee member to speak and be heard.
- Come to a decision that takes into account the five top leadership needs of the congregation.
- Choose the most suitable candidate, not necessarily the one you think is most likely to accept the call.
- While listening to your own heart and impressions, go beyond asking "Which candidate do I favor?" Instead, asks, "Which pastor can best serve our congregation?"

5: Following Up with Candidates

A. Follow Up

The call committee should send a letter or note of appreciation to each candidate for his or her willingness to be interviewed. This letter may encourage the candidate to address any additional questions or concerns to the call committee. Any expense reimbursement not

made at the time of the interview should be made now. Again, a promise of keeping the candidate current regarding the call process is essential.

It is crucial that the call committee immediately notify the candidate when s/he is no longer being considered. The decision should also be submitted immediately to the contact person from the Office of the Bishop who is assisting you with the call process.

Upon releasing a candidate from further consideration – whether after an initial phone / Skype or a face-to-face interview – it is helpful for the candidate to hear the reasons why you do not think they would be a good match for your congregation at this time. This information is helpful to both the call committee and the candidate because it fosters clarity in the selection process and gives the candidate an opportunity for growth. (Appendix 22)

B. Communication

Courtesy and professionalism are essential during this process. The call committee will communicate openly and honestly with the candidate and will continually inform the candidate about the status of their process. The call committee is also asked to stay in regular contact with the Office of the Bishop.

C. Finalizing a Candidate Recommendation

Discussion with the selected candidate should be continued to its conclusion, which might result in one of two possibilities:

1. If the discussion leads to the conclusion that this person is not the one the Holy Spirit is leading the congregation to call, the chair of the call committee should inform the candidate and the Office of the Bishop. At this point, the Office of the Bishop will provide names of additional candidates to the call committee.
2. If the discussion leads to the conclusion that this person is the one whom the Holy Spirit is leading the congregation to call, the call committee should notify the congregational council and the Office of the Bishop. The church council makes the formal recommendation to the congregation. All other candidates should be released.

D. Making a Recommendation to the Congregation

As the Holy Spirit has guided the call committee to a candidate, the decision to recommend this minister to the congregation is typically reached by common consent. If through prayer and consideration, the Holy Spirit has led the call committee to a unanimous decision on a candidate, this is certainly a time for celebration. Unanimous consent is definitely the best option.

Part IV

Church Council

The Call Process

6: The Role of the Congregational Council

A. Preliminary Compensation Discussions

When the call committee has identified their final candidate, the committee chair should contact the president of the congregation council and executive committee to have preliminary discussions about the compensation package. It is prudent to check with the candidate prior to his or her name being brought forth to the council to ensure that the committee understands the candidate's compensation requirements and that they are in alignment with realistic compensation recommendations. The council president and/or the call committee chair should have that discussion with the candidate.

B. Special Congregation Council Meeting

The council president calls a special meeting of the council to hear the recommendation of the call committee. The committee chair presents the name of the pastor. A full report supporting the motion to recommend will accompany the recommendation.

Some things to keep in mind:

1. Compensation vote

The congregation council will determine the compensation package to be recommended to the congregation for its approval. This package will carry the consent of the candidate. Forwarding the compensation package to the congregation for approval requires a simple majority vote of the council. Please refer to the current compensation guidelines for helpful information regarding appropriate compensation figures.

(<http://www.pacificasynod.org/for-leaders/clergy-compensation-guidelines>)

2. Special meeting of the congregation

The council shall organize a special meeting of the congregation. The council will establish a date, time, and place for the special meeting of the congregation to vote on the call of the pastor and the compensation package. The Office of the Bishop

should be included in arranging the date of the meeting. Proper arrangements will be made to notify the congregation of this meeting per the congregation's constitution.

Included in this notice will be the name and brief resume of the pastor and the compensation package. Prior to sending out this notice, the candidate should notify their current congregation council that they are now a primary candidate for this congregation.

3. Notification to the Office of the Bishop

When the call committee is ready to recommend a pastor to the congregation, the call committee chair, together with the council president, will notify the Office of the Bishop. The Bishop will normally appoint a representative of the Office of the Bishop, [an Assistant to the Bishop, the Dean of the Conference or a member of Synod Council] to be present at the meeting of the congregation when the vote is taken.]

7: The Vote of the Congregation on the Candidate and the Compensation Package

A. Special Congregational Meeting

1. Quorum required

The person presiding at the meeting will determine that a quorum is present per the congregation's constitution and bylaws.

2. First motion: vote to call the pastor

At the congregation meeting, the first motion presented by the call committee chair, or designee, is that the congregation vote to call the pastor. It will be seconded and discussed. The call committee will present information about the pastor, why they were led to recommend this candidate to the congregation, and the strengths and gifts that the candidate offers to the ministry of the congregation.

Only the one name recommended by the call committee can be voted on at this meeting. The vote shall be by secret written ballot. No absentee or proxy votes shall be accepted. The vote to elect is 2/3 affirmative vote of those present, as stated in the Model Constitution for Congregations C9.01.

3. Second motion: compensation package

If the vote to call is successful, the second motion presented by the congregation council will be to approve the compensation package (salary, allowances, and other benefits) to

Arrangements for moving will be made between the minister and the office of the calling congregation. The calling congregation is responsible for moving expenses. In some circumstances, the minister and the congregation may negotiate other arrangements.

D. If the Call Is Not Approved by the Congregation

If the call is not approved, the secretary of the congregation council will draft a letter to the candidate to report officially the results of the congregational meeting and to conclude the call process. Personal contact with the minister will be made before the letter is sent. The Office of the Bishop will also be immediately notified.

E. The Call is Declined by the Pastor

If the minister does not accept the call, the process will begin again with more names being offered to the call committee.

8: Special Situations

1. First Call Candidates and Ordination

In the case where this is the candidate's first call, they must be ordained before being installed as the minister. The ordination may take place at the candidate's home congregation or another congregation before being installed. They may choose to be ordained at their first call congregation. If this is the case, the officers of the congregation should contact the Office of the Bishop and the Conference Dean to prepare for a combined ordination and installation service.

2. Multiple-Congregation Parish

In the case of a parish with two or more congregations, each congregation votes separately on whether to call the pastor unless their constitution specifies another procedure. If there are not constitutional provisions for number of votes necessary for election, a 2/3 majority in each parish of all votes cast is 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 may call a minister without the participation of the other.

3. Associate / Assistant Pastors

When a minister is called to serve in company with another minister or ministers, the privileges and responsibilities of each minister will be specified in documents that accompany the call. These documents must be drafted in consultation involving the ministers, the congregation council, and the Office of the Bishop.

4. Term Calls

A congregation may call a pastor for a specific term of years. This departure from the normal rule of permanency must be described in a statement of purpose, which the Bishop must approve.

5. Part-time Ministries

Part-time ministries are normally defined as a minimum of 15 hours of work each week to qualify as a call. Anyone in part-time ministry must be given permission and opportunity to seek additional employment to supplement his or her income. All arrangement for part-time calls should be discussed with the Office of the Bishop beforehand and details need to be in writing.

9: Installation of the New Minister

The start of this new joint ministry between the minister and the congregation is marked by the ritual of installing the minister. The date is set in partnership with the pastor, the congregation, the Office of the Bishop, and the Conference Dean. The date and time should be set so that neighboring faith communities can celebrate with the congregation. The Bishop, Assistant to the Bishop, or the Conference Dean will normally be present at this service; and may preach or preside at this service. The Order of Installation of the minister may be found in the Occasional Service Book.

During the First Year

The Office of the Bishop strongly recommends the first year of ministry be supported by an intentional program of relationship-building and leadership development. One such program is **Healthy Start** (www.healthystartup.org). The Office of the Bishop can offer more details about the benefits of these kinds of programs.

10: The Call Process for Second Pastors, and Deacons

Congregation councils and call committees are encouraged to follow the same process as previously listed for ordained rostered leaders when calling a second pastor or a deacon. All steps may not be required and should be adapted to the local situation (e.g. a person already employed by the congregation as a lay staff person and who becomes rostered). Assistance is available from the Office of the Bishop to help determine the appropriate process to follow in calling a Minister of Word and Service.

Covenantal Relationships

“A complete relationship needs a covenant... A covenantal relationship rests on a shared commitment to ideas, to issues, to values, to goals, and to management processes... Covenantal relationships reflect unity and grace and poise. They are expressions of the sacred nature of relationships.”

*from the 5th Discipline: The Art & Practice of the Learning Organization written by Peter M. Senge.
Senge is quoting from a book called The Art of Leadership written by M. dePree in 1989.*

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Appendix 1

Frequently asked questions about the transition process

How long will it take to find a pastor?

Every congregation is different and the transition varies in length. It will normally take between twelve and eighteen months, but some last longer. The length of the process depends on the needs of the congregation for grieving and preparation for the next pastor; as well as, the time it takes the transition team to complete the MSP, the number of candidates interviewed, and the time call committee and candidates have available for conversation.

What will the congregation do during this time of transition regarding pastoral leadership?

In a pastoral vacancy, the Office of the Bishop, in consultation with the Congregation Council, will contract with an Interim Pastor who will, at a *minimum*, lead worship/preach (or arrange for this leadership) weekly, meet with the Council each month, and provide emergency pastoral care. The responsibilities of the Interim Pastor will vary and may range from a few hours a week to full-time, depending on the availability of the Interim Pastor and the needs of the Congregation. A letter of agreement is signed between the Council and the Pastor that explains exactly what the Interim Pastor will be doing during this time and will be signed by the Office of the Bishop.

What are the sources of names provided by the Office of the Bishop to the Call Committee?

The names of the candidates come from a variety of places, including:

- Pastors and Deacons from the Pacifica Synod asking to be available for conversation with Call Committees and having submitted their Rostered Minister Profile.
- Pastors and Deacons from other synods who have asked that their Rostered Minister Profile be shared with congregations in the Pacifica Synod. Please note that Candidates from outside the Pacifica Synod must be given clearance by their Synodical Bishop and approved by the Office of the Bishop of the Pacifica Synod before they can be considered for an interview.
- Pastors and Deacons identified by the Office of the Bishop as particularly suited for a congregation.
- Recent seminary graduates awaiting their first Call.
- Names of Pastors and Deacons suggested by members of the Congregation must be shared with the Office of the Bishop and approved by the Bishop to be considered potential candidates.

How do we determine appropriate compensation?

The synod compensation guidelines serve as a guide to congregations and candidates in helpful conversation regarding what is fair and adequate compensation. The compensation guidelines worksheet can be found on the Pacifica Synod website. A representative from the Office of the Bishop can accompany you through this process.

Can we invite the candidates to preach in our congregation on a Sunday morning?

It is not our recommendation that candidates be invited to preach in a congregation where they are being considered. If a candidate preaches in the congregation, the entire congregation becomes

involved in the overall process and members are put in the position of deciding on that person's merit based on worship leadership and one sermon alone, which is only one of many elements of pastoral ministry. The effect is to displace the careful, prayerful discernment of the Call Committee.

The Call Committee members will have the opportunity to hear or see recordings of sermons provided by the candidates. If the candidate is local, the call committee could travel to the Pastor's congregation or to a neutral site to hear them preach. If this is a desire, please arrange the timing of this visit with the Pastor. When a Pastor is being considered and is not presently serving a site the Synod staff can assist in setting up a supply location for them to preach and lead worship where the call committee could go to participate in worship. It is appropriate for the congregation to meet the final candidate at an informal meet and greet.

Should the congregation expect there to be expenses related to the work of the Call Committee?

Yes. Mileage reimbursement to committee members and to any candidates who interview with your committee can be expected. Sometimes airline tickets, rental cars, and hotel stays may need to be reimbursed. The committee may also have receipts for expenses related to meals or refreshments provided. We recommend that you use the standard IRS mileage rate for reimbursement. Often councils will designate the expenses of the Call Committee and the process out of any remainder left in your pastoral or deacon compensation package from their departure from the congregation.

Should there be alternate members of the Call Committee?

We do not recommend alternate members; however, if alternates are elected or appointed, they should attend all meetings of the Call Committee and have voice, but should not vote unless a regular member of the Committee finds it necessary to relinquish his or her position.

Appendix 2

Exit Interview – Sample Questions

Questions the committee might ask:

1. What would you say was the most satisfying part of your ministry?
2. What would be some of the most frustrating parts of your ministry here? In your opinion, what would make those areas less frustrating for the next pastor?
3. Are there any organizational or structural issues that you see could be improved? Do you have any recommendations in that regard?
4. What strengths or special talents do you see in this congregation? Do you have recommendations on how we might use or continue to use those gifts to the best advantage in the future?
5. What opportunities for ministry do you see in this community that we as a congregation might address in the future?
6. What was your assessment of this congregation when you first came? How has that assessment changed during your time here?
7. If you had a chance to start your ministry over again in this congregation, what might you do differently?
8. What have been the areas of growth in this congregation during your ministry here with us?
9. What would you like to see us doing five years from now? What unfulfilled goals of yours would you like to see carried forward?
10. How can we be helpful to you in your leaving?
11. What did we not ask you that we should have asked?
12. What has been your relationship with the leadership of the congregation? How might lay leaders be more effective in leading the congregation?

Questions the pastor / deacon might ask:

1. What were your visions and hopes when you called me to minister with you here? How are they different now?
2. What did you see as my greatest contribution to your ministry here?
3. What do you think were the highlights of our ministry together?
4. If we had an imaginary chance to do this ministry together again, what might we do differently?
5. Are there any unfinished matters that we should discuss before I leave?
6. How has the congregation grown/changed in our time together?

Appendix 3

Sample Letter of agreement between a former pastor/deacon & congregation

This is a letter of agreement at the time of resignation/retirement between Pastor/Deacon _____ and the congregation council of _____ in _____ city, _____ state. It is a clarification of the former Pastor's/Deacon's role in relationship to this congregation. It is to be shared throughout the congregation so that others may understand changes in responsibilities and can cooperate as the congregation and former Pastor/Deacon move into another phase of their respective lives.

1. The Pastor's/Deacon's resignation, effective _____, signifies their understanding that all ministerial/pastoral and administrative duties in this congregation are terminated as of that date.
2. It is mutually understood that this termination of responsibilities applies also to the interim period before another pastor is called, since the congregation needs some time and space between Pastors/Deacons to discover who they are now, where they want to go, and with what new leadership. It is agreed that the congregation council will make provision with the Office of the Bishop for interim pastoral/diaconal leadership for the congregation.
3. The former Pastor/Deacon agrees that they will not officiate or assist at any baptism, wedding, or funerals in this congregation, or attend as a worshipper, even on occasion. This is to prevent divided loyalties in the congregation and pressures on either the former or future Pastors/Deacons or interim Pastors/Deacons.
4. The former Pastor/Deacon agrees that they will not continue to make pastoral visits to members of the congregation. Circumstances make it necessary for exception for limited involvement in the following instances:
 - a) _____
 - b) _____
5. The former Pastor/Deacon agrees further that if attending this congregation in the future, it will only be as worshipper and participant and that they will neither say or listen to any uncomplimentary or critical remarks in social or other gatherings concerning the interim, past or future Pastors/Deacons.
6. The former pastor/Deacon will not do services (wedding, baptism, funeral, etc.) unless it is the specific initiation and request of the current Pastor/Deacon (rather than member). The former Pastor/Deacon will not be present in any way in the life of the congregation without the direct invitation of the current Pastor/Deacon. This expectation is in effect no matter how long the former Pastor/Deacon has been away from _____ Lutheran Church.
7. The former Pastor/Deacon will remove their vestments, equipment, books, and possessions by _____. All items belonging to the congregation will remain in the congregation. Keys to the building will be returned to the church office, no later than _____.
8. The former Pastor/Deacon will continue serving in the community in the following capacities:
 - a) _____
 - b) _____

Former Pastor/Deacon: _____ Congregational President: _____

Appendix 4

Sample newsletter article for congregation

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONGREGATION AND DEPARTING ROSTERED LEADER (PASTOR/DEACON)

Because we want everyone to be aware of some important issues related to the transition between Pastor/Deacon, we ask you to read this carefully.

The Church Council and former Pastor/Deacon have agreed to the following, and seek your cooperation, regarding the positive future relationships among us:

We will do everything possible to uphold the mission of the Church and the positive quality of life in this congregation.

We will recognize the need for time to adjust to the new relationships, and will reach out in care and compassion to one another.

We will honor the departure of the former Pastor/Deacon so duties may be relinquished; and will honor the arrival of the new Pastor/Deacon by seeking their counsel and ministry. We are aware that conducting pastoral acts (such as baptisms, weddings, funerals, confirmations, communions) and defining ministry programs and leadership styles are no longer the prerogative of the departing Pastor/Deacon, but belong to the arriving Pastor/Deacon with the Council and congregation.

While we recognize that we will continue to care about the departing Pastor/Deacon and family, **we will not** expect nor invite the Pastor/Deacon to participate in congregational life. An exception may be made to invite the former Pastor/Deacon for special congregational anniversaries or observations or at the invitation of the future Pastor/Deacon.

The nature of the relationship between Pastor/Deacon and people often gets translated as the Pastor/Deacon being a friend. The reality is that while the Pastor/Deacon may indeed have been very **friendly**, the relationship is not one of friendship.

Experience across the Church has shown that continuing relationships with former Pastor/Deacon is very positive when the above things are kept in mind.

Appendix 5

Thanksgiving and Farewell at the Conclusion of a Call

for Pastor _____ at _____ Lutheran Church
City _____, State _____

Pastor (Name), in (date) of (year) the people of (church name) Lutheran Church called you to be their pastor. As pastor, you were called here to proclaim God's word, to baptize and teach, to announce God's forgiveness, and to preside at the Lord's Table. With the gospel you have comforted the people of (church name) in times of sickness and trouble, and at the death of loved ones. Sharing joys and sorrows, you have been important to the life of this community within the church of Jesus Christ, in their service to this community, and in God's mission to the whole world.

On Sunday (date) the congregation's call to you comes to an end. As you leave this community of faith and say farewell to one another, we give thanks for your ministry and pray for God's blessing.

PULPIT: You were invited into this pulpit. From this place you have proclaimed the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ countless times throughout these past years. This pulpit has not belonged to you; the saving message of Christ is not something one can possess, but only bear witness to. You have been a faithful occupant of this church's pulpit and messenger of the good news of God's love in Christ. As you leave this pulpit we thank God for your preaching ministry.

CONGREGATION: THANKS BE TO GOD!

FONT: At this font you have presided at the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. Through the cleansing waters of baptism we welcome new members into the family of Christ. The gift of new life in Christ belongs to God. The church is the custodian of this rite of welcome, and you have introduced this congregation to many new brothers and sisters in the faith. You have presided as confirmands affirmed their baptismal promises. As you leave this font, we thank you for your ministry surrounding baptismal promises.

CONGREGATION: THANKS BE TO GOD!

ALTAR: At this altar you have presided at the Sacrament of Holy Communion. You have reminded the members here of the story of Jesus' beginning of this meal. You have provided instruction to those who would receive it for the first time. The meal is the Lord's, and this congregation has been provider of this meal to all who seek to be fed with the living presence of Christ. You have presided over this meal so that it could be served in an orderly fashion. As you leave this table, we thank you for presiding at the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

CONGREGATION: THANKS BE TO GOD!

CHANCEL STEP: Standing in front of this congregation you have led services of thankfulness to God for people who had died. You led this community in the midst of grief while expressing gratitude for God's

gift of life. You proclaimed the Good News of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and encouraged the community with the comfort of the gospel. As you leave this sanctuary, we thank you for your presence in times of loss.

CONGREGATION: THANKS BE TO GOD!

CHANCEL: It is here that you presided at services where couples were married. You were present to rejoice with those who rejoiced. Thank you for sharing those and other great times of joy.

CONGREGATION: THANKS BE TO GOD!

People of God, as representatives of the members of (church name) Lutheran, and with thanks to God for the ministry of Pastor (name) among you, do you now release her/him from service as your pastor?

We do, and we give thanks to God.

Pastor (name), with thanks to God for the members of this community and for their ministry with you, do you recognize and accept the completion of your ministry with (church name) Lutheran Church?

I do, and I give thanks to God.

Let us pray. (*presider and council members lay hands on pastor*): Almighty God, through your Son Jesus Christ you gave the holy apostles many gifts and commanded them to feed your flock. We give you thanks for the ministry of Pastor (name) among the people of God in this place.

You watch over our going out and our coming in: bless this time of ending and beginning. You surround your people in every time and place: keep us close in your love. You accompany your people in times of joy and times of trial: prosper all that has been done to your glory in this time together; heal and forgive all that has fallen short of your will for us. Help Pastor (name), as well as the people of this congregation to live with courage and gladness in the future you give to us.

As *she/he* has been a blessing to this congregation, so now send *her/him* forth to be a blessing to others; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Pastor (name) and representatives of (church name) Church: Your sisters and brothers in the Pacifica Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America give thanks to God for the ministry you have shared. We promise you both our continued support and prayer.

Rejoicing in the blessings of God in this congregation and in the ministry of Pastor (name), with hope in God's abundant grace in years to come, I announce that this pastoral relationship is ended effective (date).

Appendix 5a

Thanksgiving and Farewell at the Conclusion of a Call

for Deacon _____ at _____ Lutheran Church
City _____, State _____

Deacon (name), in (date) of (year) the people of (church name) Lutheran Church called you to be their deacon. As deacon, you were called here to proclaim God’s word through service here and in our community. You have encouraged and challenged us to be the people of God in this time and place. You have been important to the life of this community within the church of Jesus Christ, in their service to this community, and in God’s mission to the whole world.

On Sunday (date) the congregation’s call to you comes to an end. As you leave this community of faith and we say farewell to one another, we give thanks for your ministry and pray for God’s blessing.

PULPIT: You were invited into this pulpit. From this place you have proclaimed the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ countless times throughout these past years. This pulpit has not belonged to you; the saving message of Christ is not something one can possess, but only bear witness to. You have been a faithful occupant of this church’s pulpit and messenger of the good news of God’s love in Christ. As you leave this pulpit we thank God for your preaching ministry.

CONGREGATION: THANKS BE TO GOD!

CHANCEL STEP: Standing in front of this congregation you have led them in service within these walls and in the greater community. You proclaimed the Good News of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and encouraged the community through word and action. As you leave this sanctuary, we thank you for your presence among us.

CONGREGATION: THANKS BE TO GOD!

People of God, as representatives of the members of (church name) Lutheran, and with thanks to God for the ministry of Deacon (name) among you, do you now release her/him from service as your deacon?

We do, and we give thanks to God.

Deacon (name), with thanks to God for the members of this community and for their ministry with you, do you recognize and accept the completion of your ministry with (church name) Lutheran Church?

I do, and I give thanks to God.

Let us pray. (*Presider and council members lay hands on deacon*): Almighty God, through your Son Jesus Christ you gave the holy apostles many gifts and commanded them to feed your flock. We give you thanks for the ministry of Deacon (name) among the people of God in this place.

You watch over our going out and our coming in: bless this time of ending and beginning. You surround your people in every time and place: keep us close in your love. You accompany your people in times of joy and times of trial: prosper all that has been done to your glory in this time together; heal and forgive all that has fallen short of your will for us. Help Deacon (name), as well as the people of this congregation to live with courage and gladness in the future you give to us.

As she/he has been a blessing to this congregation, so now send her/him forth to be a blessing to others; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Deacon (name) and representatives of (church name) Church: your sisters and brothers in the Pacifica Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America give thanks to God for the ministry you have shared. We promise you both our continued support and prayer.

Rejoicing in the blessings of God in this congregation and in the ministry of Deacon (name), with hope in God's abundant grace in years to come, I announce that this pastoral relationship is ended effective (date) .

Appendix 5b

Thanksgiving at the Conclusion of a Call

The order follows the post communion canticle (or prayer if no canticle is sung)

Address

A representative of the congregation addresses the pastor/deacon whose call is concluding

A pastor

L: Name, on date we of Congregation Name called you to be pastor in this place: to proclaim God's word, to baptize and teach, to announce God's forgiveness, and to preside at the Lord's table. With the gospel you have comforted us in times of sickness and trouble, and at the death of our loved ones. Sharing our joys and sorrows, you [and your family] have been important to our life together in the church of Jesus Christ, in our service to this community, and in God's mission to the whole world. As you leave this community of faith, we say farewell, and we pray for God' blessing.

A deacon

L: Name, on date we of Congregation Name called you to serve among us as a deacon. *Here a description of the particular ministry may be included.* Sharing our joys and sorrows, you [and your family] have been important to our life together in the church of Jesus Christ, in our service to this community, and in God's mission to the whole world. As you leave this community of faith, we say farewell, and we pray for God's blessing.

Prayer

L: Let us pray for the saving presence of our living God:

In your world, **be present God.**

In this congregation, **be present God.**

In this community, **be present God.**

In this synod, and the whole church, **be present God.**

In the homes and hearts of all your people, **be present God.**

L: Let us pray for the mercy of God:

For work begun but not completed, **God have mercy.**

For expectations not met, **God have mercy.**

For wounds not healed, **God have mercy.**

For gifts not shared, **God have mercy.**

For promises not kept, **God have mercy.**

L: Let us give thanks for our journey together in this place:

For friendships made, for joys celebrated and for times of nurture and growth, **thanks be to God.**

For wounds healed, expectations met, gifts given and promises kept, **thanks be to God.**

For our fellowship in Jesus Christ, and for the love of God which has sustained us, **thanks be to God.**

Dissolution

L: People of God, members of Name of Congregation, do you release Name from service as our pastor/deacon?

We do, and we give thanks to God for our ministry together.

The leader addresses the person whose call is concluding.

L: Name, do you recognize and accept the completion of your ministry with Name of Congregation?

I do, and I give thanks to God for our ministry together.

Thanksgiving and Sending

L: Let us pray... Almighty God, through Jesus Christ you gave the holy apostles many gifts and commanded them to feed your flock. You equip your people with abilities that differ according to the grace given to them, and you call them to various avenues of service. We give you thanks for the ministry of Name among the people of God in this place.

You watch over our going out and our coming in:

Bless this time of ending and beginning.

You surround your people in every time and place:

Keep us close in your love.

You accompany your people in times of joy and times of trial:

Prosper all that has been done to your glory in this time together; heal and forgive all that has fallen short of your will for us.

Help Name [and her/his/their family] and all of us, to live with courage and gladness in the future you give to us.

L: As *he/she/they* has been a blessing to us, so now send *him/her/them* forth to be a blessing to others; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

The service continues with the benediction

When a representative of the synod leads this order, that person may address the person whose call is concluding, and the assembly, with these or similar words. This address may precede the benediction:

L: Your sisters and brothers in the Pacifica Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America give thanks to God for the ministry you have shared. We promise you our continued support and prayer, rejoicing in the blessings of God in Name of Congregation and in the ministry of Name. With hope in God's abundant grace in years to come, I announce that Name's service as position in Name of Congregation is now concluded.

"Thanksgiving at the Conclusion of a Call" from *Occasional Services for the Assembly* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2009), 111-113. Prayers are from *Book of Occasional Services: A Liturgical Resource Supplementing the Book of Common Worship, 1993* (Louisville: Geneva Press, 1999), 245-246

Appendix 6

Preparing for the Interim Time

Every congregation experiencing a new pastoral vacancy will, by the very nature of the vacancy, experience an interim. The question is: “Will the interim period be intentional or unintentional?” The Pacifica Synod Office of the Bishop seeks for the congregation to experience an intentional interim period leading to a long, happy, relationship between the people and new pastor.

A vitally important step in beginning transition is to work with the Office of the Bishop in the selection and/or appointment of an interim pastor. Today many retired pastors and others have been trained and are prepared to help serve a congregation for the specific time between when a pastor leaves and a new settled pastor begins. The Office of the Bishop can work with the Council to help make this transition time a valuable, growing experience for the congregation.

Some congregations may feel they can “get by” with supply pastors on Sundays and call upon neighboring clergy for pastoral emergencies. While this may seem satisfactory for a short time, experience suggests that it is preferable to have continuity and at least part-time interim pastoral services. There are important parish developmental tasks to be accomplished during the interim time. If the congregation does not have the benefit of a trained interim pastor to serve in the role of John the Baptist, as a “way-preparer,” the newly-called settled pastor may have a difficult time being accepted by members. Likewise, giving in to anxiety and pressures to “jury up and get us a new pastor” can be counter-productive in the long run. Ghosts of an unresolved past may return to haunt a new pastor who is chosen through a hasty call process. Experience in many parishes over the years also indicates that the congregation which tries to save money by “getting by” with minimal interim pastoral services is “penny-wise and pound foolish.” If only minimal pastoral compensation is required, many members will perceive that their regular contributions are not needed and the congregation’s overall financial stewardship can decline rapidly.

A typical interim arrangement for smaller congregations might be to engage the service of a trained interim pastor on a half-time basis. This will assure the congregation of ongoing continuity in Sunday worship, as well as basic pastoral care and some program leadership. Obviously, one who ministers on a part-time schedule will not be able to cover all the bases of a full-time pastor; this kind of arrangement gives unique opportunities for lay leadership to grow and assume functions which may have been previously carried out by the settled pastor. Keep in mind that the interim will be needing to provide particular attention to the five focus areas in addition to attending to the regular pastoral functions. Some ministry programs may need to go on hiatus if they cannot be carried out by volunteers, particularly in a part-time setting.

Interim pastors do not serve under call from the congregation; if retired, they retain clergy status and if under call as interim pastor, the source of call is the synod council. For clarity of expectations regarding expected areas of ministry and compensation, an Interim Service Agreement should be completed and signed by the pastor, congregational officers and the Office of the Bishop. Compensation for full or part-time interim pastoral leadership should be based upon the synodical guidelines, with possible

adjustment as dictated by the needs and circumstances of the interim pastor. In order to be free of pressures from members to become a candidate for the settled call, the Interim Agreement includes a clear statement that the interim pastor is not eligible for the settled call. This also protects the call committee's ability to interview and consider a number of candidates without undue pressure from congregational members to call the one who is "close at hand."

Interim Ministry in the Pacifica Synod

The period of transition in congregations, while in between permanent pastors, is an important time. It can be a "defining moment" in addressing the congregation's mission, clarifying it and stimulating growth responses. It is an opportunity to review the past and anticipate the future, maintaining as well as envisioning the impact of its ministry. At the very least, the interim time will include carrying out tasks of preparation so that the next "chapter" of ministry begins with promise. The work of interim ministry focuses on a congregation's continued sense of mission and service, while experience a change of pastors. The emphasis is on **REVIEWING** its past and current state while **ANTICIPATING** the future. Attention is given to the congregation's organizational structure and assessing its responsiveness in ministry without an exclusive concentration on the pastor's role. Maintaining programs and services is a concern during the interim in providing continuity.

Such an "interim emphasis", objective in nature, allows for an examination of a congregation's health while seeking to prepare for the next era of its ministry. Preparation will consist of appropriate responses to the areas explored (such as pastor-lay mutual ministry with clarification of roles, mission priorities, leadership changes and training, effective organization and identifying unique characteristics of the congregation). This goes hand-in-hand with the developing "Ministry Site Profile" describing the congregation.

During the interim time there is review of the congregation's history in order to gain insight into significant patterns or themes that impact the present. Effort is given toward identifying the current active membership and its characteristics while also considering needed leadership changes. The interim pastor's role is vital in modeling a constructive pastor/lay partnership and in encouraging forward movement.

Loss of the previous pastor is experienced by members of the congregation in different ways (personal, organizational, momentum/vision) and opportunity needs to be given for people to share their feelings and support one another in accepting this new reality.

It takes time for a congregation to adjust to a new circumstance in which its pastor is no longer present. Individually and as a congregation, members will find their way as they utilize available resources. The process of RE-VIEWING, RE-DEFINING and RE-VISIONING will be time consuming and yet productive in the end, responding to present and future challenges in ministry.

Each congregation presents similar, but also differing challenges in the interim period. This is due in part to the circumstance that has resulted in the pastoral vacancy. For example, how difficult will it be to say

goodbye to the pastor who is leaving? How long has it been since the congregation experienced a change of pastor? Is there division or brokenness which requires healing? Then, factors related to the congregation's programs and priorities in ministry account for still other challenges. Additional situations requiring interim pastoral service may be congregations in which pastors are planning a sabbatical leave or where there is medical leave.

Identifying specific challenges and arriving at realistic goals for the interim period is an important discipline. Understanding the temporary but unique aspects of interim ministry can lead to opportunities for exploration and growth.

Benefits of Interim Ministry

- Matching the special skills of a particular pastor with the special needs of a congregation in transition
- Assisting in any needed healing process for congregations that have recent or long-term histories of conflict or that face a particular crisis
- Enabling transition from the extended service of its previous pastor to the succeeding pastor
- Expediting any special transition the congregation must make as it does mission in a changing environment
- Providing ministry at a time when the congregation is open to reflection and growth or is in decline

(adapted from *Guidelines for Ordained Ministers Serving in Interim Ministry*, Division for Ministry, ECLA)

Guiding Principles from Synod Constitution

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

- a) Installation in another field of labor, or by the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer.

S14.17. During service to a congregation, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor. The interim pastor may delegate the same in part to an interim supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of this synod. The interim pastor and any ordained ministers who may assist shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor. Upon completion of service, the interim pastor shall certify to the bishop of this synod that the parochial records, for the period for which the interim pastor was responsible, are in order.

C9.06. At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.

Activities of the Interim Period

In addition to its usual work, the congregation council's agenda during the interim period includes:

- Determining leadership skills needed
- Assessing the probable time span
- Securing and contracting with an interim pastor
- Selecting and supporting the call committee
- Promoting stability in the congregation amidst change
- Determining preliminary salary/benefits for the next pastor
- Providing leadership in the congregation

The congregation is assisted by the interim pastor in addressing the **five focus areas** during this time, as a means to prepare for the future.

- Heritage:** Reviewing how the congregation has been shaped and formed
- Leadership:** Reviewing the membership needs and its ways of organizing and developing new and effective leadership
- Mission:** Defining a redefining sense of purpose and direction
- Connections:** Discovering all the relationship a faith community builds outside of itself
- Future:** Developing congregational and pastoral profiles

Also the congregation asks:

- Who Are We?
- Who Are Our Neighbors?
- What is God Calling Us to Do?

The value of the interim period will be enhanced if the congregation council develops goals and objectives to be achieved. These can result from sessions of frank discussion and planning. It is expected that after goals are set, future checkpoints will review progress, making adjustments along the way.

A successful interim experience requires negotiating a clear, specific, and realistic contract between the congregation and the interim pastor with support from the Office of the Bishop. Issues to be included are:

- Basic salary, housing allowance and expenses
- Benefits (vacation, continuing education, pension/health)
- Term of agreement
- Time: full-time, part-time, and how defined
- Duties in general and specifics emphasized
- Establish to whom the interim pastor is responsible

Partnership of Congregation and Synod

In reviewing its situation, each congregation council has responsibility to consult with the Office of the Bishop in making interim plans. Council members completing the interim assessment form provided by the Office of the Bishop will assist in the process of determining congregational needs. Some congregations find it best to engage a full-time interim pastor while for others a part-time pastor serves. In any case, members of the congregation are challenged to assume greater leadership at this time.

The Pacifica Synod recognizes the importance of transition and seeks to provide direction and support to congregation councils as well as interim pastors. The Intentional Interim Steering Committee regularly offers training and support for those seeking to serve as interim pastors. Trained Intentional Interim Pastors are given preference when recommendations are being made to congregations. Attention is given initially to the tasks of the interim period with the appointment of an interim pastor, followed closely by the establishment of a transition team, the call committee and giving direction to the call process.

Summary

The role of interim pastor is an important one for a congregation seeking a settled pastor and the five tasks are crucial in maintaining or establishing congregational health. The beginning of the interim is significant as it sets the tone for the entire period. From the outset, the interim pastor's role is to help the congregation develop confidence in their ability to assist through this crucial time. To do this, the interim pastor seeks to communicate strength and sensitivity in appropriate ways in the congregation. Because it is in the midst of transition and uncertainty, a primary goal is to help the congregation feel secure with the leadership of the interim pastor, allowing for continued growth and health.

Revised January 2017

Appendix 7

Litany of Beginning for Interim Ministry

It would be appropriate to insert this into the Sunday morning liturgy on the first or second Sunday that the Interim Pastor begins ministry among us. As a symbol of beginning, it makes sense to place it at the beginning of the service after the greeting and Kyrie.

A representative of the Synod: Pastor _____ has been contracted to be the Interim Pastor here at _____. This is a ministry of specific tasks designed for the particularities of transition. Congregational President or other representative will read the interim agreement between Pastor _____ and this congregation.

Congregation President: (Reads the Agreement)

Congregation President: (address Pastor): Is it also your understanding of our agreement?

Pastor: It is and I commit myself to this new trust and responsibility. I promise to fulfill my responsibilities here to the best of my ability in accordance with the scripture, with the Lutheran Confessions, and the Constitution of the ELCA. Will you as a congregation receive me as your pastor and partner in ministry as we seek God's call for us in this interim period?

Congregation: We will.

Congregation President: Welcome Pastor _____. We now officially begin our partnership in this interim ministry in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Amen.

Pastor: Let us pray

Almighty God, you call your people in baptism into death and resurrection of your son, Jesus Christ. You turn us from the old life of sin and give us rebirth and everlasting life. May we be renewed daily by the gift of your Holy Spirit and may we be especially aware of your leading in this interim period. Grant us faithfulness and peace in all that we do so that you may be glorified among us. We pray through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Congregation: Amen

Appendix 8

Review of the Congregation's History

Congregations need to come to terms with their history in order to move on. There is in every congregation that which has been creative and worth celebrating and that which has been debilitating. And just as human beings are shaped by their histories and experiences, so too, is a congregation.

The interim time should be filled with the telling of stories, remembering the happy events of the past and talking out loud about the sad ones. The sharing helps members get a perspective on their past, helps them “remember” things they may not personally have experienced, and frees them from unexpected and seemingly unexplainable actions that might pop up later.

Your interim pastor will have some ideas on how to help the transition team lead this review of history but here are some suggestions you might want to consider.

- Have a **History Day** and invite people to bring old snapshots of past church events. Plan an album by decade or by year where these pictures can be put and invite people to tell and write stories about them in the album. Make it a day of celebration
- Make a **timeline of the church** putting years of pastors; service, building projects, significant events of the congregation on the line. One might then ask members to write on the timeline when they joined or were married or were baptized and include memories of those events on the timeline. Ask them to write memories on the timeline of other things that were significant for them (e.g. notable events, people, etc.). Take about the events and what they mean to people. Don't be afraid to talk about why a pastor left or why a pastor served for only a short time. Name the emotions that people experience in the memory
- Put a **church trivia quiz** in each newsletter. Be sure to publish the answers since knowledge of the history is what this is about.

If you notice that the congregation is generally “living in the past,” that is, they long for things to “return” to the way they were; if they are unwilling to look at the why of traditions and practices; if they are stuck in anger, denial, grief or alienation; or if they exhibit selective memory of the congregation's past, then addressing the history in a creative way will be important.

With the pastor, pay special attention to individuals who are having difficulty with this process. Not everyone will be able to move ahead at the same rate and pastoral care is important to everyone. Since your interim pastor does not know members as well as you do, be helpful in identifying for him/her, people who may need special pastoral attention.

Appendix 9

Review of the Congregation Constitution and Policies

It will be important that your constitution is updated so that your call process goes smoothly. Review what you have currently and compare it to the model constitution of the ELCA including the recent updates. You can download the model constitution from the ELCA website at www.ELCA.org. The model constitution has various changes, usually minor, every three years after the ELCA church wide assembly in August. Every congregation council should have on their regular agenda, an update of the constitution at least every third year.

As you are reviewing your constitution in the transition period, make note of the sections and lines that must be in your constitution and the things that are optional or have various options. If you haven't updated your constitution for a long while, you may find that there are quite a number of decisions to be made about changes.

When you have updated your constitution, you may send it to the Synod Constitution Review Committee for review: *Office of the Bishop, 1801 Parkcourt Place, Building C, Santa Ana, CA 92107*. The committee will make sure that you don't have conflicting statements in sections and that it is consistent with the ELCA model constitution. The committee will return your constitution within 120 days and keep a copy on file in the synod office. If the 120 days expire before it is returned, the constitution becomes effective as it was sent in. Remember that a change in the constitution, even an update, takes a congregational vote, so be sure to do this early in the transition process.

It is likely there are one or two people in the congregation who are gifted and interested in this particular task. Let those people work out the draft and bring it to the church council for review and revision.

At the same time that you are reviewing your constitution, be sure that your congregation policies are in place and up to date. At a minimum every congregation should have a current personnel policy and financial policy including endowments and investments. You should also look at updating/creating a personnel manual, mutual ministry policy, sabbatical leave policy, parental leave policy, wedding and funeral policy, memorials policy, safe children policies, publications policy, policies regarding use of building and special equipment, etc.

It may seem like a lot of work if you have none of these in place, but it is important for incorporated entities to have procedures in place so that decisions are made in an orderly manner and reflect the core values of the congregation. You will find that decision making is streamlined as they provide guidance and framework for committees, boards, and individual members. Begin work on these policies during the interim period so that your new pastor won't have to search for them in old archives.

Appendix 10

Review of Core Values, Mission Statement and Vision Statement

Every congregation has a purpose. We know that we have been sent “to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 28:19). And we know congregations function in the areas of faith, fellowship and service. A mission statement that reflects those things could be applied to almost any Christian congregation. But no two congregations are exactly the same. Each one has its own core values, some of which may be similar to other churches, but there are some core values that make your congregation unique. These are the lenses through which you see the world, the priorities you have established for yourselves. As you begin to evaluate and update your mission statement, try to list 4 or 5 core values of your congregation.

Every congregation also has a vision, what it shall be some day. A vision is necessary for survival. “Where there is no vision, the people perish.” (Proverbs 29:18) Maybe you have not given much thought to your congregational vision lately. The interim period is a good time to re-vision your congregation. Prepare your hearts for the vision that God has for you. Spend intentional time in the interim period with spiritual disciplines. Establish a Bible Study and encourage everyone’s participation. The Book of Acts has a lot to offer a congregation doing a self-reflection and self-study as do Paul’s letters to the Corinthians. The Book of Nehemiah, probably less familiar to many, is the story of a great visionary who sets about rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem. He encounters many of the same things that congregations today encounter.

As you prepare your hearts and minds for God’s vision for your congregation, you will be asking yourself: “What is our purpose? What is God calling us to be?” And then as you discover your vision for your future, you will identify the activities you will engage in to get there. This becomes your mission statement.

A vision statement is more about becoming:

- It pictures the future of your congregation as God has planned it to be
- It describes the results you hope you will realize in the “real world”
- It captures the uniqueness that God has given your congregation
- It is short, motivational and easy to memorize

Example: to be a congregation that is known as a safe haven for all people

A mission statement is more about doing:

- It tells something about your purpose as a part of the larger body of Christ
- It hints at how you will make your vision a reality
- It is short, motivational, and easy to memorize

Example: We welcome our neighbor with enthusiasm and love, knowing that God will show us the ministry we might do.

Core values are more about being:

- Each one will describe what people experience in your congregation
- Together they capture the uniqueness which is your congregation
- They are fundamental to the beliefs and lived out

Example: Empowerment; Hospitality; Challenge; Journey; Community

So let's think about the process you might engage in order to develop or redefine your core values, vision, and mission. Let's begin with, *Core Values are intended to communicate what the congregation stands for and on what principles it operates. They guide the everyday actions of members and staff as well as congregational planning.* We assume that a congregation which demonstrates its core values at a high level, will be more effective in its ministry and will be easier to be identified by others.

1. One way to help people discover and identify their core values would be to invite all, congregation members to gather in focus groups after worship on a Sunday. It will actually take two Sundays, two weeks apart and they should both be scheduled before you have the first one. Make it celebratory and not a drudging "duty." What could be more exciting than discovering what God is calling you to do? As people are seated at tables, tell them that you are going to articulate your core values in order to be focused in your ministry. Define core values in a way that is clear to all, maybe as simply as using the definition above.

- Give each person 10 sticky notes. Ask them to write on sticky notes (one comment per note), the main things that they personally live by. For example, some may write kindness, honesty, hospitality, friendliness, privacy or integrity. Others may include things like family, friends, relationships, achievement, jokes and humor. All of these things reflect values of individuals. Ask them to put all those sticky notes on the wall someplace where all may see them.
- On different color sticky notes, ask them to write things that reflect the values of the congregation. What are some words that reflect how the congregation makes decisions, treats people, and does ministry? Some of the words might be the same, but new words may be added as well. Ask them to put those sticky notes on the wall as well.
- Then there will be a time of "storytelling." Ask people about a time when one of those "congregational values" was demonstrated. Keep that conversation going until everyone who is willing has had a chance to share. Ask if there have been times when the congregation has acted in ways that reflect values other than those listed? Add those values to the list. Ask if there are things on the personal values list that should be added to the congregation's value list? Add those values to the list.
- Let people think about the values as they leave this section and let them know that they will gather again to refine the list. Take the information from the sticky notes and put it on a single page and leave the values posted somewhere in the church where people have access to them. Ask people to add to the list if they think of something during the next two weeks. How have they seen them reflected? How might they be guides in decision making?

How have those values formed their thinking? How have those values shaped their faith journey? Then ask the members to select the top five core values. They may decide they want to name them something different in order to incorporate one or more values. For example, they may have kindness and helpfulness as core values but may decide to change the word to compassion in order to incorporate both words.

- At the second meeting, two weeks later, give everyone 10 ‘sticky dots’. Ask them to place their dots next to the ten values they believe the congregation should claim as its core values. In other words, what are the top 10 things to live by as a congregation? Have some conversation about those ten values
 - Post the core values in a place where people can see them and begin to ask about them in terms of stories that reflect those values. Bring up the values at council meetings as decisions are being made and ask what decision would best reflect our values. Live with them for a while and get feedback through the council. Note differences between the preferred values (what is listed) and true values (what is demonstrated) of the congregation. Set a time to talk about those at a later date.
2. Your congregation probably has a **mission statement** already. Does it reflect your core values? Does it describe the overall purpose of the congregation? Is it clear to those who are not members or part of the congregation? Does it guide the members of the congregation as they make decisions, make policies, and develop ministries? Do the members of the congregation know and embrace the mission statement? Where is the mission statement displayed? Where is it discussed? How does the mission statement shape the mission of the congregation and how is the mission of the congregation reflected in the mission statement?

It’s usually easier to write a mission statement in a small group than in the congregation as a whole. It is important, however, to have a feedback loop that includes everyone, so that the statement is not something imposed on them and the congregation can “own” it.

3. A **vision statement** reflects where the congregation sees itself in the future if it is effectively carrying out its mission. Putting together a vision statement can be an enjoyable process allowing people to “dream big” and “imagine success.” The statement can be used as a motivational tool or as a reminder of why we do what we do as a congregation. A helpful vision statement is one that has idealism mixed with realism. What will your congregation look like in ten years if you are actively engaged in your mission? What does God have in mind for you given the gifts he has placed in this congregation?

Appendix 11

A Review of Staffing Needs and Resources

It is often the case that when a pastor resigns, staff members submit undated letters of resignation as well. The smaller the congregation, the more appropriate this is. A pastor should be allowed then to work with the people who are in place for a few months to decide if the working relationship is such that they can accept the resignation(s) or simply tear them up and rewrite new contracts for staff members.

This process of requesting staff resignation is sometimes difficult because our tendency is to want to “take care of” the people we have come to know on the congregation’s staff. Certainly compassion for staff members is important and that will be reflected in their compensation, bonuses, and severance packages if their resignations are accepted. Always keep in mind that our congregation has a purpose: a vision and a mission to make disciples of God’s kingdom.

As you begin to look for a new pastor, it is time to look at the total staffing picture as well. Staffing is a function of the vision of the congregation. And as a function of vision, staffing should always be focused on the future. A rule of thumb is to staff for the next step of your future. What is your next step? What functions will need to be carried out to reach your vision? Who is gifted in those areas? Are there volunteers in the congregation who see this as their ministry? Is paid staff the best alternative? Should the staff position be full or part time? Are there people available for full time or part time?

Congregations sometimes seem hesitant to evaluate staff members, however careful and regular evaluation is a benefit both to the employees and to the mission of the congregation. Volunteers might also be given opportunity for evaluation as well. Keep in mind that evaluations are not a measure of the person so much as they are a measure of whether that person is right for that particular task or job. Every existing job should have a job description. Checking the written job description against what that employee may be now expected to do is a task for this interim period. Your interim pastor will help you find resources for staff evaluations, for writing job descriptions and for developing a policy for regular evaluations in the congregation.

As you look at the tasks ahead to carry out your mission, you will need to discern whether volunteers will be as effective as paid staff and whether the task requires full time or part time work. If the task requires part time staffing now, how will it increase as the ministry grows? Continually evaluate your ministry and the increases in work that employees and volunteers take on. Look at the market to establish fair wages and benefits. Annually review employee compensation and compare to cost of living increases, market parity, and value to the congregations. **Treat employees fairly.**

You are in the process right now of evaluating your pastoral needs. How should those be balanced with other staff positions in your congregation? Remember that Deacons are trained in a variety of specialties such as: Youth and Family Ministry, Educational Ministry, Outreach Ministry, Music Ministry,

Administration, Spiritual Care and Counseling. It's possible that a Minister of Word and Service or a lay person might fill some of your ministry needs as you grow into your future.

Some congregations have staff positions in these areas:

- Director of Music
- Office Administrator
- Director of Christian Education
- Director of Adult Ministry
- Director of Small Group Ministry
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Hospitality Coordinator
- Visitation Coordinator
- Director of Family Ministry
- Youth and Family Minister
- Director of Outreach and Social Ministry

Clearly each one of these comes with a job description that helps the specific congregation carry out its mission. And each of the congregations has developed its mission based on how it understands the vision that God has for them. Once you are clear about your values, vision and mission, and appropriate staff, then you can look at the possibilities for staffing.

Appendix 12

Intentional Stewardship

Supporting the mission of your congregation is more than just hiring staff as was discussed in the last section. But often the process is the impetus to look at stewardship in the congregation. Talk over a stewardship strategy with your interim pastor and feel free to contact the Office of the Bishop for resources in this area.

Stewardship is a key to accomplishing the mission of the congregation and is a reflection of its health as well. There is no “perfect” stewardship plan for a congregation and the same plan may or may not be effective in any two years. However, every stewardship plan is integral to your core values, your vision, and your mission.

We are sometimes hesitant to talk about stewardship in churches, forgetting that we exercise stewardship every time we make a decision about what we will or will not do. Christians are called to be intentional about their stewardship, not just of money, but of their time and other resources as well. Intentional stewardship is bringing to consciousness and witness those things that we are already doing and those things that we intend, with God’s help, to do in the future.

As you develop your stewardship plan in the congregation remember these things:

- People give to purposes they believe in.
- People give to things that make a difference.
- People give to things where they feel they have “ownership.”
- People tend to be generous, decent, and fair.

Think about how you present an overall stewardship plan that includes regular offerings to the congregation, special gifts and capital campaigns, and end of life legacy gifting. The congregational council has the opportunity to take leadership on stewardship during the transition time. Work with your interim pastor as you develop your intentional stewardship plan.

Related to your overall stewardship plan is an inventory of your corporate physical plant. As you get ready to call a new pastor and re-evaluate your ministry as a congregation, the following inventory will give you some questions to ask yourselves about property and the message the property gives as a witness to who you are. It isn’t meant to be a check list, to simply answer the questions, but as a guide for making improvements and upgrades to make the building more inviting and hospitable to guests. It will lead to discussions within the council, as to non-material ways to be hospitable as well.

Appendix 13

Stewardship of Property Inventory

1. Are you proud to bring friends, guests and visitors to your church building?
2. When was the facility built?
3. Is the building well located for present and future community needs?
4. When was the last renovation? What kind of renovation was it? How much did it cost?
5. How were the funds raised for the last remodel/renovation?
6. Are outdoor signs well placed for traffic visibility? Are they lighted?
7. Is information current on outdoor signs?
8. Do outdoor signs have phone numbers, email and website address?
9. Does the property look well kept? Is it landscaped?
10. Is access to the main entrance to the building easily identified?
11. Do the main doors have glass for easy visibility?
12. Is the facility handicapped accessible? Do the outdoor signs have accessibility symbol?
13. Is there adequate parking? Is the parking lot lighted?
14. Is there well marked visitor and handicapped parking?
15. Are there good directional signs inside the building (to bathrooms, office, sanctuary, fellowship hall, etc.)?
16. Are hallways and rooms well lit?
17. Are the windows clean?
18. Are closets and storage areas assigned and tidy?
19. Are education rooms free of excess paper and clutter and do they invite?
20. Are the bathrooms clean?
21. Is there a baby changing table in the bathrooms (both men's and women's)?
22. Are faucets and drinking fountains free of leaks?
23. Have the halls and rooms been recently painted?
24. Are bulletin boards updated and kept tidy?
25. Is the nursery clean and in good repair? Are toys checked and cleaned on a regular basis?
26. Is the floor in good repair? Is the carpeting up to date?
27. Is the roof in good repair? Has water damage been repaired?
28. Are fellowship areas welcoming to strangers?
29. Are chairs and tables in fellowship areas clean and orderly?
30. Is the sanctuary inviting and inspiring?
31. Are the pews comfortable and convenient for families and elderly?
32. Is there non-obtrusive but convenient space for wheelchairs in worship?
33. Is the furnace and heating system in good repair?
34. Is there a need for air conditioning in offices or sanctuary? Is it in good repair?
35. Is there ongoing capital fund for building emergencies and planning remodels?

Appendix 14

Selecting the Call Committee

The Committee which guides the congregation in seeking a new rostered leader is called the Call Committee. The members may be elected by the congregation or appointed by the Congregation Council; be sure to check your congregation's constitution. If allowed, we recommend that the council appoint a committee size of 5 – 7 members, representative of the areas of congregational life.

A critical relationship is that between call committee and the Congregation Council. Again, be sure to check your constitution. Most often, the Call Committee is commissioned with all the aspects of identifying a candidate to recommend to the congregation for call, with the Church Council preparing a compensation package in keeping with the synod guidelines.

It is helpful to select a chairperson for the Call Committee who is not the chief elected lay officer of the congregation (president or vice president, depending on your structure). That person will have ongoing responsibilities for congregational life. The Call Committee chair need not be a member of the Council.

The Characteristics desired in Call Committee members are as follows:

1. Worship Participation

Familiarity with the worship life of a congregation is critical for a call committee member. The member should know how the congregation worships and what its expectations are relating to worship. More importantly, regular participation in worship speaks of a commitment to honor God, hear God's word, and receive God's gifts of mercy and grace.

2. A Person of Prayer

The call committee will seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit through prayer as it goes about its work. The committee will invite and lead the congregation in praying that God's will be accomplished in the call process. A person who prays will be able to entertain new thoughts and directions as the Spirit leads.

3. Can Represent the Whole Congregation

The call committee should consist of persons who know the needs of the whole congregation, and while they might have a primary interest in one area, they are able to make judgments based on the greater good of the whole congregation. The goal is to make winners of the whole congregation with no one feeling that they were the loser.

4. Able to Speak Out

People on the call committee need to be able to express their thoughts and feelings. They should not be domineering or authoritative persons. Rather, they should be people who have

confidence in their thoughts and reflections, and be able to give them voice at the appropriate times.

5. Able to Listen

While they need confidence to speak, they will also need the skill of being a good listener. They will need to listen to one another, and they will need to listen deeply and thoughtfully to a candidate being interviewed.

6. A Person of Conviction with the Ability to Reach Consensus

The most effective members will be those who have clear convictions and are able to express them, while listening to the thoughts and convictions of other members. They will need to be people who are capable of working together towards consensus, trusting that the Holy Spirit is at work through them. Voting on candidates is discouraged as it tends to cause more division than consensus. Continued conversation will ultimately allow one candidate to “rise to the top” or not.

7. Available

The time commitment is normally around one year. During that time, there will be regular meetings early in the process and more frequent meetings during the interview time. Call committee members will need to be able to adjust their schedules so that they can attend ALL committee meetings, especially during the interviewing time. Only members present during the interview of all the candidates being considered should participate in the decision making discussion.

8. Balance and Representation

The committee should reflect the various groups in the congregation, seeking age and gender balance, racial representation, and take into account each person’s length of membership in the congregation to make certain both new and longer time members are included. It is often very helpful to include a youth member (15-20 years old) to serve on the committee, using the same set of expectations for involvement, availability and maturity.

9. Additional “Best Practices”

- It is rarely helpful to have a staff member serve on a call committee (a bit like hiring one’s own boss, from the corporate perspective). Essential staff members might be incorporated into the interview process as things progress.
- It is never a good idea for more than one member of a family (no matter how “extended”) to serve on a call committee. That places a disproportionate amount of power in one group.

Revised January 2017

Appendix 15

Installation of Call Committee

To be included in the worship service before the prayers of the people.

Interim Pastor: The following persons, having been chosen/elected to be the Call Committee, are asked to come forward as their names are called:

Interim Pastor: Saint Paul writes: There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them. There are different ways of serving, but the same Lord is served. There are different abilities to perform service, but the same God gives ability for some particular service to everyone. The Spirit's presence is shown in some way in each person for the good of all.

You have been appointed to a position of leadership and trust in this congregation. You are to seek the will of God and the mind and spirit of the congregation with regard to our pastoral needs.

You will examine the qualifications and interview prospective pastors. Ultimately you will provide a recommendation to the congregation regarding the issuance of a call. In all your deliberations, you are to be examples of faith active in love, seeking to maintain the life, harmony and ministry of this congregation.

On behalf of your sisters and brothers in Christ, I now ask you: Will you accept and faithfully carry out the duties of the Call Committee?

Call Committee: We will and ask God to help and guide us.

The committee faces the congregation, which stands.

Interim Pastor: People of God, I ask you, will you support these, your brothers and sisters in Christ, in their task, and will you undergird their efforts with your prayers?

Congregation: We will.

Interim Pastor: I now declare you installed as the Call Committee of this congregation. God bless you and your work together.

Appendix 16

Prayers for the Call Committee

For the Work of the Call Committee

Almighty God, giver of all good gifts: Look on your Church with grace and guide the minds of those who shall choose a pastor for this congregation, that we may receive a faithful servant who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For the Departing Pastor:

Gracious God, you have united us all in one body. We give you thanks for the work of Pastor _____ among us. As *he/she/they* leaves to a *new call/retirement* surround *her/him/them* with your Spirit. Give us the courage to release *her/him/them* to a new call and bless our remembering of the work that has been done among us. Guide Pastor _____ and us as we continue to seek and share the Good News of salvation through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

During the Interim Time

Loving God, be with us and guide us during this time of discernment. Fill our leaders with your wisdom. Keep us mindful of the work you would have us do. Lead us and guide us O Lord to be about the work of your kingdom even as the search for a new pastor continues. Bless all who have taken on extra responsibility, and fill them with a sense of your love and presence. We pray in your Son's name, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

During Interviews:

Loving God, be with us and guide us during this time of discernment. Fill our leaders with your wisdom. Keep us mindful of the work you would have us do. Lead us and guide us O Lord to be about the work of your kingdom even as the search for a new pastor continues. Bless all who have taken on extra responsibility, and fill them with a sense of your love and presence. We pray in your Son's name, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

During Interviews:

God, keep us mindful of your presence among us as we seek to discern your will for us. We pray that you will help us see beyond our own needs to the needs of you Church. We pray that you will open our eyes to new possibilities, and opportunities of being your people. Guide us and lead us O Lord. Amen.

At Meetings:

Life-giving God, create among us a desire to do your will. Open our hearts to your Word. Lead us as we seek to lead. Guide us as we seek to guide. God, we seek a new pastor to be among us to lead us and walk with us into future ministry. Direct and sustain us as we wait. Bless all who serve in the congregation, especially those who have the responsibility to lead us during the Call Process. Bless us Lord Jesus. Amen.

Appendix 17

Devotions and Suggested Biblical texts

The following are just a few texts that may be used for devotions or bible study during the Call Process. The lessons for each Sunday may also be used for your study.

- Matthew 28:16-20
- The Call of Matthew: Matthew 9:9-13
- The Call of the first Disciples: Luke 5:1-11
- Romans 12:1-8 (9-21)
- 1 Corinthians 3:1-9
- Ephesians 6:10-18
- Philippians 2:1-11
- 1 Timothy 2: Instructions concerning Prayer
 - 3:1-7 Qualifications of Bishops
 - 3:8-13 Qualifications of Deacons
 - 4:6-16a Good Minister of Jesus Christ

- Reflections on God's Call:
 - Call of young people:
 - Samuel: 1 Samuel 2:1-3:18
 - Mary: Luke 1:26-38
 - Call of Elderly:
 - Elizabeth and Zechariah: Luke 1
 - Abraham and Samuel: Genesis 18:9-15
 - Simeon and Anna: Luke 2:22-38
 - Call of the Disciples:
 - Follow Me: Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:1-11

- Reflections on being the Church:
 - Read the Book of Acts together. Read one chapter a week and begin meetings by reflecting on recent readings and the ministry of your congregation.

- Reflections on "Wilderness Wandering"
 - God's People waiting for clarity: Numbers 9:15-23
 - God's people grumbling in the wilderness – and God providing: Exodus 16:1-7

Bible Study

LEADER: Open with Prayer:

(Suggestion: Almighty God, we look to your Word for guidance and hope. Open our hearts and our minds that we may hear your word for us. Guide us through your Word to hear the good news for our lives together through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.)

A. One person reads the lesson:

- In silence write one word or phrase from the lesson that seems significant:
- Each person shares the word or phrase without additional comment.

B. A second person reads the lesson:

- In silence reflect on what this passage is saying to you.
- Each person may share their reflection without additional comment.

C. A third person reads the lesson:

- Each person reflects in one sentence or less what this passage is saying to the Congregation at this time while you are in the Call Process.
- If time allows, a 10-20 minute open discussion may be included at this time.

Closing Prayer:

Leader: *Gracious God, we are your servants in need of your love.*

The leader then offers a prayer for the person to their right. That person prays for the person on their right, continuing around the room until each person has been included.

Close with the Lord's Prayer

Appendix 18

Lutheran View of Call and Vocation

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

Amen

Evangelical Lutheran Worship

We believe it is our Savior Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, who guides the call process. The calling of a pastor represents a valuable partnership between God, the calling congregation, and the Pacifica Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. An ideal call process builds on trust, openness, and good communication. When the call process results in a good match between pastor and congregation, the total mission of the church is furthered.

Luther Says...

“... God instituted the office of the ministry, that is, provided the Gospel and the sacraments. Through these God gives the Holy Spirit, who works faith, when and where God pleases, and those who hear the Gospel. Nobody should publicly teach or preach or administer the sacraments in the church without a regular call. All Christians are called to the ministry of serving God and neighbor, but for the sake of good order in the church certain Christians are specially called to the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament.”

The Call to Ordained Ministry

It is through the church that God calls certain Christians to ordained ministry. Once that call is discerned, the candidate devotes years to study, training, and preparation under the guidance of the whole church through the bishop and the candidacy committee. Not only does the local congregation participate in the call process, but so does the whole church through the Office of the Bishop.

Discerning the Call of Your Specific Ministry

During the time of transition between pastors, a congregation is invited to engage in a spiritual discernment process to discover its call – what God wants the church to be and do in the next phase of its ministry.

Without knowing where God is leading your congregation, a congregation cannot know what skills, direction, and priorities it needs in their pastor. Pastors are not called to provide the vision for congregations; pastors are called to help congregations move toward the vision they have for where God is taking them.

The interim time is a period for your congregation to intentionally engage in a process that involves Bible study, prayer, and an honest and thoughtful look at your congregation and community, as a way to discern the ministry direction where God is leading you. Only after your congregation discerns its ministry direction can the call committee begin to discern what type of pastor to call to serve them.

Once this becomes clear, the call committee, in consultation with the Office of the Bishop, begins the discernment process of discovering who God is calling to be the pastor in this next chapter of your congregation's life and ministry. The discernment process is an exciting journey that will take you through specific steps but moves according to the Spirit's timing. Faithful attentiveness to and trust in the guidance of God's spirit, will help to make your journey rich and fruitful.

The Partnership Between the Whole Church and the Local Church

The local congregation is fully the church, but the local congregation is not all the church there is. The local congregation calls a person to be its pastor, but the whole church everywhere has a stake in who is called and how the call process is handled.

The call committee, the congregation council, and the entire congregation all participate fully in the process. But so does the Office of the Bishop, who represents both the interest and the commitment of the whole church in seeing that the pastor called is suited to ministry under the call that is extended.

The Office of the Bishop has deep concern for the well-being of the congregation's life and ministry, having reviewed its profile carefully. The Office of the Bishop also has deep concern about the person and gifts of the prospective pastor. In the call process the Office of the Bishop, the congregation, and the prospective pastor work together with the guidance of the Holy Spirit to bring about a new partnership that is faithful to the Gospel, empowers the local congregation in its ministry, and strengthens the whole church as people of God.

The Call Process is Unique

On the basis of our Lutheran theology, a pastor is **called** to serve a congregation. The pastoral call process is not simply a hiring a new employee for the church as would be done in a secular workplace. It is participating in God's own choice for the church by opening yourselves to the work of the Holy Spirit who will guide, nudge, empower, inspire, comfort and inform you in your journey toward finding new pastoral leadership.

Called, Not Placed

Unlike some other denominations, Rostered Leaders in the ELCA are not "placed" or "moved around" by bishops. Neither can congregational councils or senior pastors unilaterally secure rostered people for congregational leadership. All rostered leaders must be **called** by a congregational ballot.

Called, Not Hired

The call process is not the same as the hiring process in other parts of society. The pattern that includes head hunting, résumé shuffling, or personality contests is highly inappropriate in the calling of a pastor. Neither is the call process like a popularity contest in which hosts of candidates present themselves to their best advantage so the call committee can select one as the winner.

The ELCA call process is unique because it is an effort to discern what God wants for this local church and for the whole church, in order that the Gospel may be proclaimed and the sacraments administered in accordance with the Gospel

The Wrong and Right Questions

Therefore it is not appropriate for a call committee to be guided by questions such as: “Will the congregation like this pastor?” “Will it approve of the call committee’s choice of candidates?” “Will people feel good having this pastor around on Sunday morning?” “Will this person do for now until a better pastor comes along?” “How will this person look to the rest of the community?”

The foremost question for the call committee always should be “Is this the person God intends this congregation to have as its pastor?” Human preferences and personalities should never come before the mission to which God calls the church. That is why every meeting of the call committee will include prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the work that is being done.

This means that candidates for the call will not be submitted – and should not be evaluated – on the basis of age, gender, race, physical limitations, or any other “human distinctions.” It is about the spiritual gifts needed for leading and facilitating ministry in a particular setting; nothing more, and nothing less.

The Significance of Service on a Call Committee

Many people report that serving on a call committee turned out to be one of the most important things they ever did as members of a congregation. It allowed them to experience firsthand how the Holy Spirit works through committed Christians to help the church be faithful to its calling. It gave them an opportunity to see how the local congregation is vitally connected to the whole church. And it let them participate in opening a new chapter in the life and ministry of their congregation as part of the history long, worldwide Church of Jesus Christ.

Expectations

It is therefore important to be clear about expectations. What do you and this congregation expect of your pastor in:

- Worship
- Learning, Teaching
- Stewardship leadership
- Fellowship leadership

- Witness, Evangelism, Outreach
- Pastoral Care
- Communication
- Administration
- Ecumenical leadership
- Service in the Pacifica Synod / Wider Church
- Service Projects / Social Justice
- Other ...

Conversely, since congregational ministry is always a mutual ministry between the called and the congregation, what can or should your pastor expect of you in:

- Support of family and time for family life, or personal time / time with friends if single
- Compensation package
- Continuing education opportunities
- Opportunities to serve and lead at the synodical and churchwide levels
- Support through your prayers
- Honor and respect them as a leader in the Church
- Other ...

Doing the “Rite Thing”

It’s often helpful to listen carefully to the words that are spoken during the Rite of Installation. A pastor is asked:

- “Will you discharge your duties in harmony with the constitution of the church” (See Chapter 7.31.11 & 7.31.12 of ELCA Constitution; Chapter 14 of the Synod Constitution; and Chapter 9 of the Constitution for Congregations)
- “to preach and teach in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church.”
- “to love, serve and pray for God’s people; nourish them with the Word and Holy Sacraments, leading them by your own example in the use of the means of grace, in faithful service and holy living.”
- “to give faithful witness in the world, that God’s love may be known in all that you do.”

And the congregation is asked:

- “Will you receive this messenger of Jesus Christ, sent by God to serve God’s people with the Gospel of hope and salvation? Will you regard them as a servant of Christ and a steward of the mysteries of God?”
- “Will you pray for them, help and honor them for their work’s sake and in all things strive to live together in peace and unity of Christ?”

Other “Right Now” Expectations

1. What are your expectations of the Call Process itself?
 - a. Do you clearly understand the process?
 - b. Do you understand the general time line for a “normal” process, and that this process ought neither to be protracted nor rushed?
 - c. Do you understand how calling *your* pastor (or other rostered person) involves the entire synod and the whole church?
2. What are your expectations of this Call Committee?
3. What are your expectations of your Congregational Council?
4. What are your expectations of the Office of the Bishop?
 - a. In the ELCA, the Office of the Bishop and the congregation work in mutual consultation regarding the process and in identifying candidates for call. *(C9.01)*
 - b. The bishop: attests Letters of Call, authorizes and provides for the installation of the pastor, authorizes and provides for the ordination of pastors.
5. What expectations do you have of yourself?
 - a. Pray; perhaps more than you have done in a while!
 - b. The Holy Spirit “calls, gathers, enlightens, sanctifies and keeps us united in faith.” (Luther’s *Small Catechism; The Apostle’s Creed, Article 3*)

Confidentiality Revisited

Confidentiality cannot be overemphasized in the task of calling a pastor. Mention of specific candidates outside the call committee meetings is inappropriate until the committee is ready with its recommendation to the congregation. It is important to keep all names and both verbal and written information about prospective candidates within the confines of the committee. This means committee members will need to establish ground rules and boundaries, not only with the congregation at large, but also with those in their household or place of work.

Openness

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

Holding Confidence

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

The reasons for this are at least twofold.

1. The congregations the candidates are serving are (most likely) unaware that they are interviewing. If a name should get out and back to a candidate’s congregation it could severely damage his or her ability to do effective ministry at that site. Never underestimate the “connectedness” (who knows whom) within the Lutheran community!

2. You run the risk of turning the whole congregation into a call committee. People will be second guessing why you decided what about whom; without having all the information (the rest of the story) before them. The call committee has been chosen and set aside to do this work on behalf of the congregation. The whole congregation will meet the final candidate when the time is right.

Communication

While confidentiality is important, that does not mean secrecy! Every means ought to be utilized to keep the members of the congregation informed about the call committee's work and progress.

There must be as much transparency as possible. Consider using:

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

As you keep the congregation informed:

- Always familiarize them with the process.
- Summarize specific presentations from the visit from the Office of the Bishop, and others the congregation may engage with during this time
- Keep them apprised of progress
- Spell out preferred process for communicating with the members of the call committee

Do these things and:

- The congregation will clearly understand the process, including the roles of the Office of the Bishop, the intentional interim pastor, the transition team, the congregation council, call committee and congregation.
- They will be able to identify and communicate with the members of the call committee.
- People will have a clear understanding of the proper process for communicating with the members of the call committee.

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

Appendix 19

A Guide to the Ministry Site Profile (MSP)

Call Process Online: <http://www.elca.org/call-process/>

Ministry Site Login: <https://webapps.elca.org/call/Login/>

The Ministry Site Profile (MSP) and other forms that ministry sites will need can be found at Call Process Online (www.ELCA.org/call-process). The information from your submitted MSP is stored in the Mobility Database System which makes it possible for MSPs to be sorted, studied, searched and shared in a quick and efficient manner.

Purpose and Structure

The MSP is designed to stimulate your reflection, to be a summary of the characteristics and ministry of your ministry site, and to serve as the first impression that you wish to give to prospective candidates.

- **An introduction:** The MSP is meant to be a conversation starter or introduction to the life and work of your ministry site. It is not intended to be an exhaustive description of every aspect of your ministry. Focus on the key things that describe your ministry site in order to pique the interest of prospective candidates for call. Give special attention to writing your “Summary Description” since what you write will be featured prominently on the *Current Openings* web page.
- **Flexibility:** The MSP seeks to encourage your creativity and initiative by offering options and choices for presenting your ministry site. Your responses in the “Narrative” sections should be thoughtful and concise. The “Commentary” section of the MSP invites you to find ways to creatively talk about the life and ministry of your site. The optional “Seven Reflections on Ministry and Context” gives you the opportunity to go deeper into some key issues of your context if you wish.
- **Corroboration:** The MSP requires that a recommendation be submitted by an outside observer. Choose someone who is in a position to know your ministry and send them the form found on Call Process Online. The reference will be asked to identify your ministry site’s characteristics using the same “Ministry Site Characteristics” survey that you filled out on your MSP. This helps to validate the information on the MSP and gives prospective candidates another perspective.

Discernment Process

What is God’s hope and dream for your congregation? In what ways is your congregation strong and unique? Would your neighborhood miss you if you were gone?

One of the final questions on the MSP asks about your Discernment Process. Before starting to work on your MSP, along with the interim pastor, the leaders of the ministry site and call committee should spend time in discernment. Think and pray about your sense of *Mission* at this time in your history and consider these three things:

- Why do you exist, and for whom? What would someone who observes you from the outside conclude about your sense of purpose and mission?
- What are you clearly good at? What ministry activities bring out the best in you and seem to be valued by others?
- What does your neighborhood really need right now, and how are you helping to meet those needs? An experience of *Mission* that feels powerful, Spirit-inspired and authentic often happens where these three things converge. That is, Mission is what happens when we are true to our purpose, using our best gifts and responding to the needs that are before us in our community and world. Ministry that only touches on one or two of these things may not be at the core of what your mission is. Thus your prayerful discernment is important, and much of the MSP will give you the opportunity to share what you have discerned.

Steps in Completing the MSP

1. Get Acquainted

Before launching into the MSP, it would be wise to take a look at samples of the form. Go to Call Process Online (www.ELCA.org/Call-Process-Ministry-Sites) and download a sample of the MSP. You might find it especially helpful to answer the narrative questions while you are offline. This way you can work at your own pace and benefit by the spellcheck feature. Later you can block the text and drop it into the online MSP. Remember keep your answers focused and concise.

Next, go to Call Process Online and become familiar with the information found on the web pages, especially the Ministry Site page (www.ELCA.org/Call-Process/Ministry-Sites). When you feel you are ready, click on the link to the “Ministry Site Profile” in order to create your account.

2. Create an Account

To create an account, click on “Ministry Site Profile” (<https://webapps.elca.org/call/Login>) and then click on the link for New User. You will be asked to supply an email address and a password for your account. Write your password down and store it safely.

- Next you will be asked to enter information for your account profile. If your site is a congregation, choose “Congregation” and give your ELCA congregational ID number. If your site is a congregation and a part of a cooperative of congregations, choose “Multiple Point Parish”. If your site is a church-related organization, choose that option. Whatever you enter on your Profile page will automatically show on the MSP form that you open. Click “Update” and then “Create a New MSP”.
- You can return at any time to the “Account Profile” screen to update your Profile. Whatever you enter will be reflected in your MSP. Remember to click “Update”.
- Now that you have an account, you will find that the next time you login you will have the option to update your Profile or go to MSP Status” where you can review your work, update an existing MSP, or manage other aspects of your account.

3. Filling out and Submitting the MSP

The MSP is completed on the web; it does not require that you download software in order to work on the form.

- **SAVE YOUR WORK** frequently as you proceed using the “Save and Continue” button on the bottom of each page. If your online session times out, you will lose the work you have done on it since you last saved your work.
- **REQUIRED FIELDS** (marked with *) must be filled in before proceeding.
- **TWO USERS:** Congregations must fill out the entire MSP. With the concurrence of the synod bishop, church-related organizations may fill out only Parts I, III, IV.
- **CALL PROCESS CONTACT PERSON:** At the end of the MSP you will be asked to insert the name of your “Call Process Contact Person”. This should be the staff member from the Office of the Bishop that is working with your congregation in the call process.
- **FINAL REVIEW:** When you get to the final page of the MSP you will be prompted to download a PDF copy of the MSP so you can review it one last time.
- **CORRECTIONS:** You can reopen your MSP to make any last corrections.
- **SUBMIT:** When you are really sure your MSP is ready, click on “Submit” on the final page of your MSP. Both you and the synod office will receive an email confirming that the MSP has been received.
- **ACTIVATION:** The MSP does not become active in the Mobility Database System until the Office of the Bishop approves it.
- **MSP STATUS:** You can, as needed, monitor your MSP forms by logging into Call Process Online. Click on the tab marked “MSP Status”. Here you can choose to review your MSP, update your MSP, look at the status of your MSP, or request the supporting forms.
- **UPDATE:** If you edit and resubmit a MSP that is already active in the system, your new MSP will require re-approval by the office of the bishop.
- **ARCHIVING:** Your approved MSP will remain active until you request that it be archived, or the bishop determines that it must be archived, or a year has elapsed since it was first submitted.
- **MULTIPLE POINT PARISHES** are encouraged to collectively complete one MSP. The “Commentary” section of the MSP can be used to describe any unique features of each of the cooperating congregations. If it is necessary for each congregation to fill out its own MSP, then the “Commentary” section should contain the congregations’ collective description of how the parish cooperative functions.
- **MORE THAN ONE OPENING:** If your ministry site has more than one opening to be filled by a rostered leader, you may edit your existing MSP to reflect this second position and then resubmit it. If you need a blank MSP in order to describe this second position, you can download a blank form on your “MSP Status” page. Your MSP Status page will have a snapshot for each of the MSPs you have submitted.

Some Helpful Tips

- **BE CREATIVE:** The MSP gives you the freedom to add comments, share ideas and passions, and present your ministry site's gifts. Make your MSP distinctive.
- **BE THOUGHTFUL:** The narrative questions are the most important. It is more important to write concisely and insightfully than to just write many words.
- **BE HONEST:** It never pays to represent your ministry site in a way that will not prove to be true over time. You are more likely to match successfully with a rostered leader if both you and they are honest about your respective ministry, style and gifts. Romans 12:3 is good advice.
- **BE SPECIFIC:** Study the list of characteristics and preferences and focus your answers. Avoid being too general in your responses.
- **SEEK COUNSEL:** Involve as many people as possible at your ministry site in thinking and writing about the questions of Identity/Purpose, Gifts/Resources, and Context/Needs. Begin every conversation with Bible study and prayer. Share what you propose to submit with the leadership and membership of the congregation. Listen to the critique that is offered. Have the Council vote to approve the final version of the MSP that will be submitted.
- **COOPERATE:** Never approach a rostered leader directly about your position. Each synod staff has a shepherding role in call process within their synod that must be respected.

Two Supporting Forms

The various forms that ministry sites use in the Call Process come together to form the Ministry Site Portfolio. The portfolio contains the Ministry Site Profile, the following two supporting forms, and other documents that you may choose to submit to the synod staff person working with you.

Reference Recommendation

Someone from outside your congregation who knows your ministry site well can complete a recommendation form about your characteristics and ministry. Before having a *Reference Recommendation* form sent to them, you should first secure their willingness to do this. Then return to Call Process Online and login to your MSP Status page. Click on "Request a Reference Recommendation" and enter the person's name and email address. The system will send the person a request and the login information to access the form. After the person has submitted the form, you and the reference will receive an acknowledgement by email. The form automatically attaches to your MSP. The form is considered confidential. If you would like to review it, please ask your reference for a copy.

Seven Reflections on Ministry and Context

You may choose to enhance your MSP by providing additional information on the *Seven Reflections* form. The form is listed immediately alongside the Reference form (see above). Once submitted it automatically attaches to your MSP.

Updated January 2017

Appendix 20

Sample Questions for Candidate Interviews

The following questions are merely suggestive; however, in forming any particular question the key issue is, “What answer are you looking for? How will you know when it’s answered well?” Each question may be evaluated in three ways: (a) What does it have to do with the position? (b) What do we need to know? (c) Would we be willing to answer the same questions about ourselves?

1. Tell us about your faith journey.
2. Share with us your calling that led you to become a pastor.
3. Describe the areas of ministry which you value as high priorities.
4. Talk about the ministry areas you like to do. Why?
5. What pastoral roles give you the most trouble? Why?
6. Discuss your strengths as well as those area on which you need work.
7. Share your thoughts regarding the worship life of the congregation.
8. What are your expectations for yourself and lay persons in liturgical practices?
9. Describe your preaching philosophy and style. What things do you emphasize in your preaching. What are your ideas regarding children’s sermons?
10. Discuss your thoughts, expectations and requirements concerning catechetical instruction.
11. Discuss in detail your expectations/philosophy of, and pastoral involvement in: Educational Ministry, Evangelism, Stewardship, Benevolence, Youth Ministry and Social Ministry.
12. From your perspective, what were the areas in the last parish which gave you personal satisfaction?
13. What role do you see the pastor fulfilling in relating to committees?
14. How do you see your role in relation to congregation council?
15. Describe your philosophy of visitation and pastoral calling.
16. We’d like to hear about your family.
17. Why are you considering accepting this call?
18. How do you see yourself involved in our community and the synod?
19. Tell us about your hobbies.

The Committee may want to ask specific questions based on the areas that they have identified as high priority on their Ministry Site Profile. Following are some sample questions in each of the areas.

Worship / Preaching

1. Describe how you go about preparing for the worship service on Sunday morning.
2. Think back in your ministry and tell me about the most difficult sermon you ever preached.
3. Share some of your thoughts about the worship life of a congregation.

Social Ministry / Outreach

1. Tell us how you evaluate community needs and community strengths.
2. Describe how you have contributed to the quality of life in your community.

3. Describe how you go about motivating members of your congregation to respond to community needs.

Administrator / Leader

1. Describe the steps you take normally when working with groups to achieve consensus of cohesiveness.
2. How would you describe your style of leadership in overseeing the work of the congregation.
3. Tell us about a period in your life when you had to manage multiple demands in your work and how you determined priorities.

Teaching the Faith

1. How do you evaluate the faith development of others?
2. Describe your approach to helping adults to grow in their faith.
3. Describe your approach to teaching children and young people about the Christian faith.

Evangelism

1. Describe ways in which you typically become acquainted and associate with unchurched people in your community.
2. What kind of guidance and training do you provide members of your congregation for reaching unchurched persons in the community?
3. Describe how you have achieved a multicultural approach to your ministry.

Interpersonal Climate

1. What steps do you take in helping others feel secure, trusted, and open with you?
2. When pressure mounts how do you maintain your cool in ministry?
3. Describe an experience where conflict arose between yourself and another person and how resolution was finally achieved.

Ministry in Crisis / Counseling

1. Describe your style of ministry to persons in crisis.
2. Describe how you have used the establishment of boundaries to strengthen your ministry.
3. How do you assess your own professional limitations when ministering to persons in crisis?

Interpreter of Theology

1. Describe ways in which you communicate the faith.
2. Describe your skills as teacher and preacher.
3. What resources keep you theologically and Biblically fresh and current?

Innovator

1. Describe your approach to introducing new ideas in the congregation.
2. Describe your current vision for ministry and how you would help others in the congregation to capture that vision.
3. Think back in your ministry and describe a situation that was stagnate or failing and describe how you stepped in to revitalize it.

Denominational Leadership

1. Describe how you have guided your congregation into understanding their relationship to the greater church.
2. Describe your participation in the work of the church beyond the congregation, including ecumenical relationships, church agencies and institutions.
3. Describe what your congregation believes to be their role as a congregation of the ELCA.

Stewardship

1. Describe how you have helped others grow in their personal stewardship.
2. In what ways have you helped members understand the management of their money and their responsibilities as Christian stewards?
3. Describe the development of your personal sense of Christian stewardship.

Personal Growth

1. Describe some of your most important accomplishments and how you went about reaching those goals.
2. How do you work at making yourself more effective in your work?
3. Briefly describe ways in which you care for yourself physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually.

Your Call To Ministry

1. Briefly describe the events which led you to prepare for the ministry.
2. Describe the process of deliberation which helps you determine God's call.
3. In what ways has your call to ministry changed over the years?

The Call Committee may find it useful to conclude the interview by asking the candidate:

- What are two or three things that we should know about you that we didn't ask?
- Do you have any further questions that you want us to answer?

Possible Interview Questions for Associate Pastor Candidates

1. What are the essential things for maintaining a good and effective relationship with the senior pastor and other staff?
2. Tell about a time when you had a disagreement with a co-worker or supervisor. How did you react? What was the conclusion of the disagreement? What did you learn? What would you do differently?
3. Tell about a time when you were unclear about direction from your supervisor or colleagues. How did you handle it? What did you like about your reaction and what would you change?
4. [Assuming that the candidate has met with the senior pastor, and that the sr. pastor is not in the room] After your meeting with the senior pastor how do you see your styles complementing each other? What do you see as the potential difficulties in your working relationship?
5. [Who does the Associate Pastor report to? Who does their evaluations?] How does the candidate react to that structure?

Appendix 21

Possible Questions Candidate Might Ask

Types of Questions Asked by Candidates

1. What do you think people like about this congregation?
2. What are some of the things you hope this congregation will do in the future that would benefit you? Others?
3. What are some of the reasons why you are members of this congregation and not some other one?
4. What kind of organizations do you have?
5. What kinds of activities take place on a weekly/monthly basis?
6. How do you welcome and assimilate new members?
7. What plans has the council made for doing additional self-study and goal setting?
8. What structure of government does this congregation have?
9. What kind of benevolence do you support?
10. In what area(s) of social concern has the congregation been active?
11. What kind of priority do you give to the functions of a pastor, both in terms of importance and number of hours? What gets deferred if time runs out?
12. What view does the congregation have about continuing education? What about time off? Financial support? Will the pastor be encouraged to attend the annual pastors' conference? Who will pay the expenses?
13. How does the pastor's family receive support? Are there expectations of the pastor's family?
14. Administratively, who prepares the council and congregational meeting agendas?
15. Who chairs meetings?
16. What are the housing opportunities in the neighborhood? What present financial arrangements have been made for the pastor's housing? Has the council and/or congregation envisioned any future ideas for the pastor's housing (shared equity, mortgage loan from the congregation, etc.)?
17. What is the school situation in the area?
18. (In the case of multiple-staff ministries) How do you describe the task divisions, lines of authority, conflict management and reporting methods for the pastoral staff, council, congregation and committees?
19. Describe what the community's image of the congregation is (if you can tell).
20. What hardships has the congregation experienced in the past? Have there been any major conflicts?
21. What is the attitude of the congregation toward the church at large? Synod? ELCA?
22. What are the possibilities for growth in size and involvement?
23. How many pastors has this parish had in the past twenty years?
24. How is the pastor's leadership accepted by the congregation?
25. What kind of secretarial service will the congregation provide?

Appendix 22

Release of Candidate:

Sample letter to candidates not recommended for call

Dear Pastor Smith,

On behalf of the Call Committee of _____ Lutheran Church, I would like to thank you for your willingness to be considered as a candidate for the position of (Senior) (Associate) Pastor. We were impressed by your fine record and sample sermon.

(You may wish to go into more detail of strengths and areas of concern)

At this time, we have chosen another candidate to recommend to our congregation. The choice was difficult because of the quality of the candidates recommended to us. We wish you blessings upon your continued ministry.

Sincerely,
Jane Doe, Chair
Call Committee

Appendix 23

PAPERWORK FLOW CHART FOR CALL PROCESS

Church Council/Executive Committee receives a letter of resignation from the Pastor.

- a. Together, Pastor and Council (or Executive Team) decide how to notify the congregation.
- b. Church Council (Council President) contacts the Synod Office.
- c. A Transition/Call Process Manual is sent via email to the council president
- d. The Church Council reviews their responsibilities (Transition/Call Process Manual section I)
- e. A date is set for the church council to meet with the Assistant to the Bishop for mobility.
- f. An Interim Pastor is appointed by the Bishop to serve the congregation in consultation with the church council.

Interim Pastor arrives and is installed in the congregation

- a. Interim Pastor consults with the Bishop and Assistant to the Bishop (if not already done.)

Church Council and Interim Pastor appoint/elect a transition team (per the congregation's constitution).

- a. Transition Team, Interim and Synod Staff meet
- b. Transition Team does the work of walking with the congregation to determine their ministry/mission/needs.
- c. Transition Team writes the Ministry Site Profile (MSP)
- d. Transition Team presents MSP to the Church Council for Approval
- e. Church Council gathers names of people to possibly serve on Call Committee.
- f. Church Council reviews budget for compensation package.

Church Council sets a congregation meeting to elect (appoint/select) Call Committee per Congregational Constitution)

Four-Way Meeting with Synod Office

- a. Church Council, Transition Team, Call Committee, and Synod meet to go over the Ministry Site Profile (MSP). Call Committee stays to meet with assistant to the Bishop for call process.

Call Committee

- a. Receives names from the Synod Office
- b. Conducts mock interview with Assistant to the Bishop
- c. Receives names from Synod Office
- d. Interviews candidates
- e. Selects Candidate of Choice (COC)

Call Committee takes name of Candidate of Choice (COC) to Church Council.

Church Council works out Compensation and other details with COC.

- a. Church Council Executive Committee and Chair of Call Committee meet with COC to go over compensation package.
- b. Send a copy of Compensation, Benefits and Responsibilities Form (including Appendix A) to Bishop ASAP so s/he can recommend any adjustments as needed before it goes to congregational vote.
- c. Council sets congregational meeting per their constitution with only 2 items on the agenda:
 1. Call of the Candidate of Choice
 2. The Compensation Package
- d. Council will advise Synod office of date for congregational meeting
 1. Synod will send a representative to meeting when possible.
 2. Bishop's office will send Letter of Call "Certificate" to be signed by Council President and Council Secretary following an affirmative vote.
- e. After congregation votes to Call with package
 1. If a Synod representative is unable to be present, Council will advise synod office of outcome of vote.
 2. Council may call to COC to advise them of outcome of the vote.
 3. Council will send the original Definition of Compensation, Benefits and Responsibilities, signed by the Council President and Council Secretary to the Synodical Bishop
 4. Council will send signed Letter of Call "Certificate" back to Synodical Bishop to attest.

Bishop will send the following to COC

- a. Letter
- b. Definition of Compensation, Benefits and Responsibilities to be signed by COC
- c. Addendum if needed
- d. Blue Acceptance of Call Form

Candidate of Choice (COC) will have up to 30 days to:

- a. Sign Definition of Compensation, Benefits and Responsibilities and make 2 copies (send 1 copy to congregation with a letter of acceptance. Send 2nd copy to Synodical Bishop; COC keeps original document)
- b. Send completed Blue Acceptance of Call Form back to the synod office.

A representative from the Bishop's office will present original Letter of Call "Certificate" at installation or if unable to attend, original will be mailed directly to the Pastor.

FORMS

Certification of Church Records

Certification and Completion of Financial Obligations

Interim Assessment Guide

Sample Interim Pastor Contract

2017 Clergy Salary Range Development Worksheet *

Steps toward Shaping Appropriate Compensation *

Examples for the 2017 Clergy Salary Range Development Worksheet *

Definition of Compensation, Benefits, and Responsibilities of the Pastor Guide

Definition of Compensation, Benefits, and Responsibilities of the Rostered

Leader and Congregation *

Appendix A of Definition of Compensation, Benefits, and Responsibilities *

Sample Letter of Call Certificate

Ministry Site Profile (can also be found at ELCA.org/call-process)

* these can also be found at www.pacificasynod.org/for-leaders/clergy-compensation-guidelines