

Seven Steps in the Call Process for Congregations



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

1. The Current Pastor Resigns

- Pastor's resignation is announced
- A "farewell celebration" is planned and the ministry is celebrated
- Pastor and congregation each follow a new path

2. Beginning the Interim

- Synod staff helps congregation arrange for interim ministry
- Church council helps keep congregation focused on its mission
- Congregation continues its ministry

3. Completing the Ministry Site Profile

- Synod staff leads an open forum to explain the call process to members of the congregation
- Information is gathered from the entire congregation as a "snapshot" of ministry
- Profile is prepared as an aid for the call committee, pastoral candidates, the congregation, and the synod staff
- How is God at work in and through this congregation--past, present, and future?

4. Forming the Call Committee

- A congregational call committee is formed and installed
- Officers are elected for the call committee

5. Considering Candidates (Competency, Chemistry, Commitment)

- Synod staff presents candidates to the call committee for consideration
- Names are surfaced through the synod office, interested pastors who self-nominate, and the congregation itself
- The goal of the call committee is to represent the congregation as it searches for a pastor who can lead them into the future God has in mind
 - What do the congregation and new pastor expect of each other?
 - It's not shopping at the store; it's searching for a partner in ministry
- Confidentiality is crucial for the call committee in terms of detailed information concerning pastoral candidates
- Who does God have in mind for this congregation? Be prepared to be surprised!
- The Holy Spirit is involved in this process -- really.

6. Extending the Call

- The call committee recommends a candidate to the council who will bring the name to the congregation for a vote
- A congregational meeting is scheduled for voting on the candidate
- Bid farewell to the interim pastor

7. Welcoming Your New Pastor

- Once the call has been accepted, an installation date is set with synod office
- Welcome your new pastor with open arms!
- Throw a party! Call your friends! Praise the Lord!

Throughout the call process, the entire congregation is involved in three activities:

• *Prayer*

• *Patience*

• *Communication*

For more information –

- www.swmnelca.org, at right, select Engaging Leaders/Call Process
 - Synod Office – 507-637-3904
 - Synod Minister Jeffrey Engholm – eng@newulmtel.net
 - Support Staff Carla Klawitter – carla.klawitter@swmnelca.org
- 148A Compliance Admin. Liza Eekhoff – liza.eekhoff@swmnelca.org