

Checklist for Congregational Leaders During the Call Process



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

(See www.swmnelca.org under Call Process)

Step 1 – The Current Pastor Resigns

- _____ Pray, especially for the departing pastor (and family), elected lay leaders whose duties will multiply during the interim, and all members of the congregation that they will be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit in the calling of a new pastor.
- _____ Letter of acknowledgement received from the bishop.
- _____ Goodbye celebration planned (optional: include Liturgy for Departure of a Pastor in the worship service).
- _____ **Certification of completion of all financial obligations returned to synod office.**

Step 2 – Beginning the Interim

- _____ Pray, especially for the congregation and its leaders, the synod staff who will assist the congregation during the interim, and those who provide interim pastoral ministry.
- _____ Pastoral ministry transition team identified.
- _____ Interim pastoral leadership identified.
- _____ **Completed interim letter of agreement and effective start date returned to synod office.**
- _____ Information package for interim pastor completed.
- _____ **Agreement for use of Statute 604 compliance administrator completed and returned to synod office.**
- _____ Time line posted in church (optional).

Step 3 – Completing the Ministry Site Profile (MSP)

- _____ Pray, especially for your congregation and its leaders, those who provide interim pastoral ministry, and guidance of the Holy Spirit in completing your MSP.
- _____ Open forum scheduled with synod staff.
- _____ Find the MSP form at <http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Vocation/Rostered-Leadership/Call-Process/Call-Process-Forms.aspx>.
- _____ Congregational survey completed.
- _____ Survey information summarized for MSP.
- _____ Possibilities for ministry partnerships with neighboring congregations explored; full- or part-time ministry, limits of experience or compensation for the new pastor resolved.
- _____ MSP completed and reviewed by congregation.
- _____ **MSP submitted online.**

Step 4 – Forming the Call Committee

- _____ Pray, especially for your congregation and its leaders, those who provide interim pastoral ministry, and those who will serve on your congregational call committee.
- _____ **Call committee formed and synod office notified.**
- _____ Call committee chair, secretary, and correspondent appointed.
- _____ Call committee installed.



Step 5 – Considering Candidates (Competency, Chemistry, Commitment)

- _____ Pray, especially for your call committee, the synod staff, candidates who are recommended to your congregation, and those who provide interim pastoral ministry to your congregation.
- _____ Call committee meets with synod staff to receive candidate mobility information.
- _____ Definition of Compensation form and instructions regarding Letter of Call received from synod office.
- _____ Information packets assembled for candidates.
- _____ Candidates for personal interview selected and invited.
- _____ **Synod office notified of interview dates (§604).**
- _____ Practice interview conducted (optional).
- _____ Plans made for personal interview with candidates (travel, housing, and other arrangements).
- _____ **Interviews completed and reports of interview submitted to synod office.**
- _____ Interviewees thanked in writing and reimbursed for expenses.
- _____ Candidates no longer considered are notified and thanked.
- _____ **Synod office notified regarding candidates no longer considered.**
- _____ Call committee selects candidate to recommend to council.
- _____ Candidates notified regarding decision about recommendation.
- _____ Call committee makes recommendation to council.

Step 6 – Extending the Call

- _____ Pray, especially for the candidate recommended to your congregation and all members of the congregation, that they will be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit in their decision-making.
- _____ Congregational meeting set for vote on candidate.
- _____ **Synod office notified of name of candidate and date of vote (§604 and Letter of Call).**
- _____ Presentation is prepared about recommended candidate.
- _____ Filled-in Letter of Call form received from synod office.
- _____ Congregational meeting (2/3 majority vote required to extend call).
- _____ **Candidate and synod staff notified of outcome of vote.**
- _____ **If vote is yes, completed and signed call documents forwarded to synod office for bishop's review and signature.**
- _____ Response to Letter of Call received (*candidate has 30 days*).
- _____ Farewell planned for interim pastor.

Step 7 – Welcoming Your New Pastor

- _____ Pray, especially for your new pastor, your congregation, and your new ministry partnership.
- _____ **Installation date set with synod office.**
- _____ Arrangements for moving complete.
- _____ Welcome celebration arranged.
- _____ News releases sent to appropriate media.
- _____ **Evaluation of call process submitted to synod office.**
- _____ **Review of interim pastorate submitted to synod office.**
- _____ Thanks expressed to those who have provided interim pastoral ministry, members of the call committee for their service, and synod representatives for their assistance.