

GLOSSARY TERMS YOU WILL HEAR AND USE

There are terms that you will hear and use during the time of your pastoral vacancy. While most of them are easily understood, it may be helpful to review them.

"Assistant Pastor"

An ordained pastor who accepts specific responsibilities in a parish under the leadership of another pastor. May be a voting delegate at conventions of district or synod.

"Associate Pastor"

An ordained pastor who shares with a senior pastor responsibility in a congregation for the pastoral office. May be a voting delegate at conventions of district or synod.

"Call" ("Divine")

The solemn agreement between a pastor and a congregation designating the responsibilities that each undertakes in support of the other in fulfillment of Christ's mission. Because congregations elect pastors to fulfill God's mandate that there be someone to fill the pastoral office, only after asking for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it is appropriate to speak of a "Divine Call."

"Call Committee"

A committee of the congregation charged with guiding and directing the process of calling a pastor. The committee does not make decisions for the congregation but ensures that members have full information about and access to the decisions rightfully belonging to the entire congregation and/or its voters' assembly. The constituency and procedure of the call committee is usually stipulated in the congregation's bylaws.

"Call Documents"

Documents that: (1) express the solemn nature of the agreement ready to be instituted between a congregation and a pastor and (2) state that each is ready to assume responsibilities for the good of the other and in support of furthering the mission Christ gives to the congregation.

"Calling Congregation"

A popular way of describing a congregation that is without the services of a regularly called pastor or is in the process of calling an additional pastor to its team. Sometimes people refer to a "vacant" congregation, but that is not accurate. The congregation, of course, is not "vacant"; only the pastoral office is temporarily vacant of a person serving.

"Calling from the Field"

Describes the process of issuing a call to a pastor who is currently serving another congregation or is on "candidate" status.

When a pastor has two or more calls, one from the congregation he serves and the another from a different congregation or entity of synod, he must prayerfully consider the challenges and opportunities of each. He asks: *"Where does the Lord want me to serve in His church?"*

"Call List"

The list of pastoral candidates, including those nominated by the congregation and those recommended by the district president, from which the congregation will elect and call a pastor according to the process prescribed by the congregation's constitution and bylaws and adopted by earlier congregational resolution.

"Call Meeting" or "Call Service"

The congregational meeting (service) at which the pastor-elect is chosen according to the process prescribed by the congregation's constitution and bylaws and adopted by earlier congregational resolution.

Normally the constitution and bylaws require that there be sufficient notice of such a call meeting. This requirement should be faithfully observed.

The circuit visitor should be notified in advance so that he is able to attend the call meeting. Even if not prescribed by the congregation's bylaws, it is certainly wise for the congregation to have the services of the circuit visitor in such an important meeting.

"Candidate"

A word used to designate a pastor in good standing on the clergy roster (ordained minister of the Gospel) of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, currently not serving in a called position in a congregation or other LCMS ministry position, but eligible and available for such a call.

This term is also used in reference to a seminary graduate who is ready for his first call and placement through the process used by the seminary placement officers and the council of presidents.

"Non-Candidate" A word used to designate a pastor who is eligible to perform the duties of any of the offices of ministry, but who is not currently active or emeritus and who chooses not to be a candidate.

"Restricted Status"

An ordained pastor of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod who may or may not be presently serving under a call, but is not eligible for another call, until restricted status is removed by his district president.

"Chaplain"

An ordained pastor who serves an institution (hospital, prison, the military, campus, etc.) rather than a congregation.

"Colloquy Applicant"

A pastor who served in another denomination and joined the LCMS. The applicant must meet certain eligibility requirements. Such an individual may be required to receive seminary training and/or to serve a vicarage, perhaps somewhat abbreviated, and may then be certified for clergy roster status by the LCMS Colloquy Committee. He is then eligible for placement through the LCMS Board of Assignments, normally in the district from which he came.

"Deferred/Delayed Vicar"

The traditional seminary model consists of four years of education. The first two and fourth years are academic on campus and the third year is a "vicarage" in a parish. Due to their age, educational experiences, and other factors, a seminarian may be assigned a vicarage at the end of the program rather than after two years. This is referred to as a "deferred/delayed vicar." Though technically serving as a vicar, the placement is usually to a congregation that would seriously consider calling him to be its pastor upon graduation. As with the usual model, the vicar would have an experienced pastor serve as his supervisor during that year.

"Installation"

The installation service, or "Rite of Installation," is the event in which the congregation publicly commits the exercise of the Office of the Keys and other desired pastoral functions to the pastor. It is also the festival service of worship celebrating the pastor's arrival and affirming his acceptance of the call.

Under the practice and policy of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the district president is to authorize the installation of all within the Texas District. This authorization is sent after the district president is informed by the circuit visitor of the details of the installation service.

The district president will conduct the Rite of Installation, or, if not available, will authorize a pastor to conduct the Rite - usually the area vice president or circuit visitor.

"Intentional Interim Pastor"

A pastor who is called to provide specialized pastoral services during an extended pastoral vacancy, often necessitated by conflict within the congregation, between the congregation and its previous pastor, or following the termination of a lengthy pastorate by retirement, resignation, or removal from office.

The intentional interim pastor (IIP) is selected by the congregation, with input from the circuit visitor, MMF and office of the president. He usually serves for a limited time (6-24 months) and is not eligible for the call list of the congregation.

"Ordained Pastor"

A pastor who has been certified for parish ministry by the church-at-large (LCMS through its seminaries) and has been called to the ministry of Word and Sacrament by a congregation or agency of our church.

"Ordination"

The festival service that publicly affirms the church's certification for the pastoral ministry. Ordination may take place at the candidate's home congregation with the authorization of the president of the district to which he has been called to serve. Otherwise, ordination takes place in the presence of the congregation to which the candidate has been called. The district president will conduct the Rite of Ordination or, if not available, may authorize the area vice president, circuit visitor or another pastor.

"Pastor Elect"

A term used for the pastor who has received a call from a congregation but who has not yet accepted or declined the call.

"Pastor Emeritus"

An ordained or commissioned pastor who has retired after reaching the age of 55, or for reasons of total and permanent disability, is no longer serving a full-time ministry but is still on the roster of synod. He continues to be a communicant member of a congregation of synod. The term is **also** used as an honorary title given by a congregation to a retired pastor, with or without specific duties. In *The Lutheran Annual*, a retired pastor is identified by "EM" after his name.

"Pastoral Office" (Office of Ministry)"

The office of public ministry divinely established and referred to in Scripture as "shepherd," "elder," or "overseer." Within this office are contained all the functions of the ministry of Word and Sacrament in the church.

"SMP"

A Specific Ministry Pastor is serving in a specific ministry context under the supervision of a general pastor. This seminary training is an alternate route program which enables one whose leadership is raised up within a home congregation.

"Seminary Graduate"

A pastoral candidate who has recently graduated from the seminary, has been certified by the faculty and is eligible for placement.

The call for a seminary graduate must be submitted through the office of the district president. The deadline is usually mid-February each year, although there may be a small number of graduates ready for placement at other times during the year as well. Check with the district president for further information.

"Vacancy Pastor"

A pastor who agrees to provide pastoral services to a congregation during the period of a vacancy of the pastoral office. *(See Section I for more information.)*

Specific responsibilities and compensation for the vacancy pastor should be clearly defined. Your circuit visitor is ready to assist you by recommending a pastor and an appropriate compensation guideline. The circuit visitor may be the vacancy pastor, or another area pastor may be chosen. A vacancy pastor is almost never to be placed on the congregation's call list, except under extraordinary circumstances, in consultation with the district president.

"Vicar"

An unordained seminary student who serves under the supervision of a called pastor in a congregation for a period of one year, receiving required seminary credit. Vicarage is an integral part of seminary training. It is usually the third year of the four-year seminary education. *(See "Deferred/Delayed" Vicar above.)*

"Worker Priest"

An ordained pastor who serves a congregation part-time and financially supports himself partially or fully through secular employment.