

CALLING A PASTOR

A Manual for Congregations Calling a Pastor



TEXAS DISTRICT

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

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SECTION I

THE PASTORAL VACANCY SUPPORT SYSTEM

When a congregation experiences a vacancy in the pastoral office, there are people available to assist the congregation address their immediate needs and move forward in filling the vacancy with a new pastor. Look especially to the following:

THE DISTRICT PRESIDENT

The District President assists the congregation with three special responsibilities:

- Insures the continuation of the Gospel Ministry of Word and Sacrament.
- Assists in the process by which the congregation calls a pastor.
- Provides the congregation with a list of pastors for call consideration (call list).

- **Your District President is:**

Rev. Michael Newman mnewman@txlcms.org 512-926-4272

- **The President's Administrative Assistants are:**

Cindy Hilewitz chilewitz@txlcms.org 512-926-4272, X-240

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1221 Satellite View
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THE CIRCUIT VISITOR

The circuit visitor has been elected by the congregations of your circuit and by the convention of the Texas District. He will serve as the district president's representative and is on the scene to advise you. Specifically, the circuit visitor helps in these ways:

- Assists in the selection of and sometimes serves as a vacancy pastor.
- Along with the mission and ministry facilitator and office of the president, helps the congregation evaluate the need and availability of an intentional interim ministry.
- Helps in securing assistance for preaching, Holy Communion, baptisms, confirmation instruction, weddings, funerals, visitation, etc., as requested by the congregation, if there isn't a vacancy pastor.
- Along with the MMF, helps the call committee assess the needs and opportunities of the congregation.
- Meets with the congregation during the call meeting/service to provide counsel or guidance as needed.
- Assists in arranging, if requested, a meeting between the pastor-elect and the congregation. Also assists in the arrival, installation and integration of the new pastor and family.

THE AREA MISSION & MINISTRY FACILITATOR (MMF) OR MISSION SUPPORT SPECIALIST (MSS)

In concert with the circuit visitor, your mission and ministry facilitator assists your congregation in completing and interpreting your congregational self-study and pastoral profile.

Your Mission & Ministry Facilitator / Congregational Support Specialist/ is:

AREA A	Rev. Lincon Guerra	515-528-0025	lincon@txlcms.org
AREA B	Rev. Ben Gonzales	832-331-0951	bgonzales@txlcms.org
AREA C	Mr. Larry Rietz	512-954-2104	lrietz@txlcms.org
AREA D	Rev. Dr. David Bahn	281-450-5414	david.bahn@txlcms.org

THE AREA VICE PRESIDENT

The area vice president assists the district president in his respective geographic area of the state.

Your Area Vice President is:

Area A	Rev. Allan Eckert	361-522-5410	allan.eckert@gmail.com
Area B	Rev. Larry Krueger	254-715-1707	larrygkrueger@gmail.com
Area C	Rev. Nathan Wendorf	956-320-4337	nw@splch.com
Area D	Rev. John Davis, Jr.	832-451-7248	pastordavis@mlckaty.com

THE VACANCY PASTOR

- Provides pastoral services during the pastoral vacancy. As agreed upon with the congregation, he is responsible for the services of worship, visitation and catechism instruction. He normally attends voters'/church council meetings and any other activities that the congregation deems necessary, as available and as determined by mutual agreement with the congregation.
- Specific responsibilities and compensation of the vacancy pastor should be clearly defined by the congregation and agreed to, in writing, by the congregation and the vacancy pastor. (*A sample agreement between a congregation and a vacancy pastor is shown on page 4.*)
- 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.

THE INTENTIONAL INTERIM PASTOR

- An intentional interim pastor is a specially trained pastor designed to help a congregation in an intentional way, for a specific period of time, to address and resolve specific concerns or to help in a transitional period following a special need experienced by the congregation. An intentional interim pastor also performs all the responsibilities of a vacancy pastor and is not to be placed on the congregation's call list. The circuit visitor and office of the president will assist in determining the need and availability of an intentional interim pastor.

THE CONGREGATIONS AND PASTORS OF YOUR CIRCUIT

- The congregations and pastors of your circuit are willing to assist you if you encounter an emergency and are unable to contact your circuit visitor, your area vice president or the district president for immediate assistance.

If immediate pastoral help is needed contact the vacancy pastor, intentional interim pastor or circuit visitor first.

VACANCY PASTOR AGREEMENT

(Sample)

We, the voting members of _____ Lutheran Church of _____, Texas, on (date) _____ voted to extend an agreement with Rev. _____, to be our vacancy pastor. As such, he is to preach the Word of God in its truth and purity and administer the Sacraments to God's people as given in Scripture. He is also to fulfill other pastoral functions, e.g., teach confirmation classes to both youth and adults, visit the hospitalized and shut-ins, appropriately prepare self and others for leading and conducting Sunday and other special worship services, and fulfill general administrative duties as agreed upon by the pastor and the congregation.

This agreement becomes effective (date) _____ and will terminate upon the installation of a newly called pastor or upon a date agreed upon by both the vacancy pastor and the congregation.

The congregation is to pay Rev. _____ for his services with a salary of \$_____ per week/month, paid every two weeks/on the 15th and 30th of each month. He will receive _____ per mile for all travel expenses incurred for the services of the congregation. The congregation will: provide him with a cell phone/cover his cell phone expenses/pay for all long distance calls. The congregation may cover other expenses, e.g., medical insurance; conference registration, printer ink and paper costs, etc., that are incurred as a result of services to this congregation, as per agreed upon between the congregation and the Vacancy Pastor prior to incurring those expenses. Expenses are reimbursed upon adequate documentation to the _____ (Bd. of Elders/Trustees/Treasurer).

If Pastor _____ is unable to fulfill his services for a short or an extended time, he is to inform the Bd. of Elders and seek to find a replacement to serve during that time. The circuit visitor and president's office would be available for assisting in this matter as well.

If the vacancy pastor serves another congregation, the following sentence should be added: We understand this agreement is entered into with the full knowledge and support of _____ Lutheran Church of _____, Texas, which is served on a full time basis by Rev. _____. We express our thanks to _____ Lutheran Church for allowing their pastor to also serve us.

SECTION II

THE PASTORAL CALL AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PASTOR AND PEOPLE – A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

God calls His people through His Word to fellowship with Him and to serve in the world with the good news of the Gospel and the good life of Christian love.

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9).

We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. To this He called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14).

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life -- the life was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us -- that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ (1 John 1:1-3).

God's people in a specific place, after sincere consideration and prayer, call a pastor from the larger Christian family to inspire and equip them for their ministry. The pastor's focus of service is the faithful proclamation of the Gospel and administration of the Sacraments, loving acts of pastoral care, an exemplary Christian life and concentrated efforts for the growth of the church.

Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lusius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off (Acts 13:1-3).

His gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ... (Ephesians 4:11-12).

Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists murmured against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. And the twelve summoned the body of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:1-4).

...appoint elders in every town, as I directed you, choose a man who is blameless, the husband of one wife, whose children are believers and not open to the charge of being profligate and insubordinate. For a bishop, as God's steward, must be blameless; he must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of goodness,

master of himself, upright, holy, and self-controlled; he must hold firm to the sure word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to confute those who contradict it (Titus 1:5b-9).

The pastor, professionally competent and, above all, a man of faith, recognizes his Call by the congregation to be a Call from God and conducts his ministry with care, humility, and dedication.

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy scriptures, the Gospel concerning His Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by His resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of His name among all the nations, including yourself who are called to belong to Jesus Christ (Romans 1:1-6).

Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God which He obtained with the blood of His own Son (Acts 20:28).

...even as the Son of man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28).

So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ as well as a partaker in the glory that is to be revealed. Tend the flock of God that is your charge, not by constraint but willingly, not for shameful gain but eagerly, not as domineering over those in your charge but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd is manifested, you will obtain the unfading crown of glory (1 Peter 5:1-4).

Members of the congregation hold their pastor in high regard as God's servant, a gift of divine grace. They offer him and his family the best of their love, prayers and support.

This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God (1 Corinthians 4:1).

In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel (1 Corinthians 9:14).

Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching; for the scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves his wages" (1 Timothy 5:17-18).

Pastor and people consider each other as joyful partners in the Gospel, each making contribution to God's work according to their calling and ability and measure of faith.

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, thankful for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now (Philippians 1:1-5).

Let him who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches (Galatians 6:6).

SECTION III

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.

"SMP"

A Specific Ministry Pastor is eligible to serve under the supervision of a general pastor only in the specific ministry context for which he has been trained. He may not be offered or accept a call for ministry for which he has not been certified. May be an advisory delegate at conventions of synod. May be a voting delegate at conventions of district.

"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.

"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.

SECTION IV

THE STEPS OF CALLING A PASTOR

From time to time in the life of every congregation there arises the need to call a pastor, either as a sole pastor or as associate or assistant. Be comforted by the fact that yours is not the first to do so. The district president, circuit visitor, MMF and other district staff are here to help you through the calling process.

The following pages are not to be considered hard-and-fast rules. They are a "suggested call procedure," developed for the congregations of the Texas District through the district president's office. Over the years, the process has been revised and updated to serve the congregations better in this time of transition. Therefore, go thoughtfully, go carefully, go in prayer.

When Your Pastor Leaves: Some Feelings You May Have

When your pastor decides to accept another call, retires, dies, or leaves the ministry of the congregation in any other way, a congregation may be in a state of relief, surprise, shock, bewilderment or sense of being lost. Some may anticipate being alone and without the help they had always counted on. Questions arise: *"Why did our pastor leave? Didn't he like us? Who will take care of my family if someone dies? Who will teach the confirmation class? Can our congregation continue as effectively as in the past? What about members who seemed deeply attached to their former pastor? Will they continue their association with the congregation now that he is gone? What will happen if our pastoral vacancy lasts a long time? Who will help us?"*

As these and many other questions arise, remember several great truths. You were all drawn into the relationship of faith by the only One who sows the seeds of faith, God Himself. He says He will never leave you nor forsake you. In addition, your fellow Lutherans in the Texas District will contribute their influence and effort to bolster you and supply your needs for pastoral service. You will not be abandoned.

Also keep in mind that the decision to accept the call to another congregation, retire, or resign, generates many feelings and memories for your pastor. Regardless of the circumstances of his leaving, a grieving process begins for everyone. To help make the departing transition as pleasant as possible, an exit interview with your pastor may be appropriate. This could be conducted by the Board of Elders or other group assigned to this responsibility. Such an interview can provide information valuable in future planning as well as helping to determine the gifts, abilities, and strengths of the pastor to be called to fill the pastoral office.

You probably have no real idea how strong you are as a congregation. Just because you haven't done certain things does not mean that you can't! Trust the One who has never failed you and begin the calling process confident that this process, surrounded by God's gracious care, will help you discover your next pastor.

*The following guidelines are written with the understanding that
most congregations are served by only one pastor.
They may need to be modified to meet the needs of calling a pastor to a multi-staff position.*

STEP 1: NOTIFY THE DISTRICT PRESIDENT, THE AREA VICE PRESIDENT, THE CIRCUIT VISITOR AND YOUR MISSION & MINISTRY FACILITATOR (MMF) AS SOON AS A PASTORAL VACANCY OCCURS

This should be done in writing as soon as you become aware that the office of the pastoral ministry in your congregation will be vacated. The chairman of the congregation, board of elders or lay ministry usually sends this letter.

If a pastor has received and accepted a call to another congregation, he should:

- a) Notify the president of the district he is in and the district to which he is going (if different) of his decision.
- b) Ask the congregation for a release of membership to the new congregation.

STEP 2: SELECT A VACANCY OR INTERIM PASTOR, DEFINE YOUR EXPECTATIONS OF HIS WORK AND NEGOTIATE HIS COMPENSATION PACKAGE

As soon as the district president and the circuit visitor receive notice that your parish will be needing a pastor, one of them will make arrangements for a meeting with your church council or whatever group is responsible for continuing administrative concerns in your congregation. Consult your congregation's constitution to see if it designates a group to handle this responsibility.

Contact your circuit visitor to set up an initial meeting with your MMF and call committee to outline procedures, fill in background information and discuss your concerns. Depending on the circumstance, this meeting may be held before your present pastor actually moves. At this initial meeting, a decision should be made concerning pastoral services during the pastoral vacancy. The role of "vacancy pastor" or "intentional interim pastor" will be discussed as well as compensation for any vacancy pastoral services.

STEP 3: ESTABLISH A CONGREGATIONAL CALLING PROCESS UNLESS THIS IS ALREADY SPECIFIED IN YOUR CONSTITUTION

Some congregations have the calling procedure clearly outlined in their constitution. If so, follow it. If not, determine whether there should be a special call committee, or whether the board of elders or the church council will serve in this capacity. Appendix A is a sample resolution that can help address this important matter. *(It is also important to clarify at this time the minimum number of nominees to be presented on the ballot for the call meeting.)*

Procedurally, from that time on, the congregation should be guided by whatever process its decision-making body has chosen. Spiritually, the congregation should be consistently and continually in prayer for God's divine guidance through the whole calling process. Calling a pastor is not to be taken lightly, but be approached with the deepest level of spiritual conviction and fervor.

STEP 4: DEVELOP A PASTORAL PROFILE

All people, including pastors have been uniquely created and gifted by God. Each congregation has unique needs for a pastor with specific gifts, talents, abilities and specialized skills. In order to help congregations collectively determine their current needs in calling a new pastor, a Pastoral Profile Survey process has been developed. This process is done through a web based process through Survey Monkey. Your MMF will help you initiate and utilize this process so that all members of your congregation have the opportunity for input. Most members will utilize the online version. A printed version of the survey is included as Appendix B for any

members who do not wish to do the online version. Paper versions of the survey can be submitted to the Call Committee to be entered on the website prior to closing the survey period.

Following the survey process, your MMF will return and provide a "Pastoral Profile Survey Report" of the results for your Call Committee and congregation which will be utilized by the president of the Texas District in screening names of candidates. This report can also be utilized the Call Committee as they review candidate information.

STEP 5: DOING A SELF-STUDY OF YOUR CONGREGATION'S LIFE, MINISTRY & MISSION

Congregations normally desire to move toward calling a new pastor as quickly as possible. Indeed, there are evidences of undue haste in this regard. In striving for efficiency in the calling process, the congregation may overlook the particular potential of its situation and miss a time for renewal and redirection.

Some type of self-study process should be initiated at the beginning of the pastoral vacancy. Once again it is recommended that you utilize resources provided by your area MMF.

In addition, major questions should be addressed, including:

Has the community changed in culture and character?

Has the congregation lived up to its full potential?

Is it time to identify a list of expectations we have in a pastor for the sake of our ministry to one another and to the community?

What are the core values that determine what the congregation does and why it does it?

The your MMF and your circuit visitor are available to assist in the congregational self-study, which should be returned to the district president's office before the call list is compiled by the district president.

NOTE FOR DISTRICT SUBSIDIZED CONGREGATIONS

Congregations receiving financial assistance from the Texas District need to consult with their mission and ministry facilitator, who works with the Board of Mission Administration (BMA). BMA policy calls for a review of mission and ministry during a pastoral vacancy in a financially assisted congregation. See Appendix D for more information about the process.

STEP 6: RECEIVE NOMINATIONS FOR THE OFFICE OF PASTOR

Unless otherwise stipulated in the constitution or bylaws of your congregation, all communicant members have the right to nominate any pastor in good standing on the Clergy Roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Appendix E is a sample nomination form. (Other members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod may also submit nominations for your congregation to the district president.) It is to be noted that though a pastor may be "in good standing on the Clergy Roster of the LCMS," there may be circumstances known to the district president's office that would preclude a pastor's name from a call list. Generally, pastors who have served less than three years in their present parish are not considered as viable candidates.

Establish a deadline for the nomination process on the parish level. Additional nominations may be made at any time during the vacancy but they will not necessarily be considered for the call list if they are received after a published deadline.

IMPORTANT - Please be sure to instruct the members of your congregation to **nominate**

only those pastors who possess the qualifications and experience necessary for the pastor of your congregation, as determined by the a Pastoral Profile and the Congregational Self-Study. This means that nominations from the members of your congregation should be neither requested nor received until after Step 5 of this process has been completed and the results have been shared with the congregation.

STEP 7: FORWARD ALL NAMES RECEIVED TO THE DISTRICT PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

Upon receipt of the list of nominees, the Pastoral Profile and the Congregation's Self-Study from the congregation, the district president will request a Pastor's Information Form (PIF) from each out-of-state nominee's district president. This form, completed by the nominee's district president, is returned to the Texas District President and contains basic information about age, education, previous areas of service, family size and health. The Texas District President will also request a copy of the Self Evaluation Tool (SET) completed by each nominee. For nominees in the Texas District, the information described above will normally already be in the files of the Texas District President's office. The district president will normally add additional qualified candidates to the congregation's call list.

STEP 8: RECEIVING YOUR CALL PACKET FROM THE DISTRICT

After an evaluation of all the nominees with the assistance of the other district staff, the district president will prepare the call list. This process can take from 6-8 weeks. The length of time is determined by a number of factors, many over which the district president has little or no control, e.g., the length of time it takes to receive information about pastors from other districts or how long a pastor takes to update his PIF (Personal Information Form) if it is out of date.

After it has been reviewed by the district president, the call list, along with the PIF, SET and current congregation statistics for each nominee, will be sent to the congregation through the circuit visitor. In some cases, the circuit visitor may direct the call list to be sent directly to the congregation. *(The PIF and SET documents are for the call committee's use and are NOT to be duplicated for the whole congregation. The call committee may write and publish a summary in preparation for the call meeting.)*

As mentioned before, men who have served less than three years in their present parish are not considered as viable candidates. For any of a number of reasons, including personal problems, service in a critical ministry, personal desire, evaluated inability to serve the unique ministry of your area, and others, a nominee submitted as a candidate by your congregation may not be suitable for your needs. Please remember that there may be good and sufficient reasons for this reality, based on the needs of the parish, the man involved and the Church-at-large. The district president will be happy to communicate such matters to the call committee and will provide information on individual candidates, at the committee's request, as long as such information does not break confidence nor defame the man involved.

In most situations, it is not acceptable to place the name of the vacancy or interim pastor on the call list, although congregations sometimes feel the desire to nominate him. Some reasons for not calling the vacancy or interim pastor are these: 1) Being the pastor in that place at that time gives this pastor a distinct advantage over a pastor who is lesser known and/or who lives at a greater distance, even though he may be very suited for the call. 2) A vacancy pastor may treat the congregation differently if he thought he would be a candidate for their pastor than if he knew he would not be. By the same token, men currently serving in your circuit or in a neighboring circuit will ordinarily not be placed on your congregation's call list.

When the district president returns a list of candidates for the office of ministry to a congregation, the first reaction may be disappointment at the modest amount of information apparently available. Every parish hopes for, and wants, substantial facts to aid them in the consideration of candidates. Most of the information desired cannot be secured, as for instance, *"Can we be sure he will understand our needs?"* and *"Can we be sure our congregation will like his style of ministry and preaching?"* There is no way to secure that type of information and assurance. A pre-call interview might give you more of that type of insight or understanding

Factors considered as a call list is prepared are listed below.

1. The candidate has met the standards of academic preparation, has faced and successfully responded to the minimum emotional, psychological and theological standards of his training, vicarage and practice as a pastor prior to his ordination and initial placement.
2. The candidate's health, the number and ages of the members of his family, his length of service in a given congregation, how many congregations he has served and for how long, are part of the information you receive and may wish to evaluate.
3. Each pastor on your list has been evaluated by his current district president in a number of categories. It is assumed that most of our pastors have more than average capability in all categories. Significant strengths or weaknesses, whether in character, ability or theology, will be included in his district president's report to your district president. This includes comments on family health, personal abilities and potential for different kinds of ministry in different kinds of places. Your district president evaluates this and, where it is appropriate, sends it on to you through your circuit visitor. We are very careful that, at this level, the Spirit be not impeded or that information that might be injurious to the candidate's good name be not broadcast about. However, sincere and honest attempts are made to ensure that all important information is always given to the congregation.
4. The president's office has made an attempt to contact the non-Texas candidates of your call list by phone to determine whether there is anything going on in his life or ministry that would make it very difficult for him to seriously consider saying 'yes' to your call if the Lord leads you to extend it to him. The circuit visitor may wish to phone the Texas candidates to ask the same question.
5. All candidates on the call list have had an opportunity to complete the Self Evaluation Tool (SET), a comprehensive questionnaire enabling the communication of a man's pastoral and theological beliefs and practices. Your congregation will receive and should thoroughly study the SET of each candidate for whom it is available, understanding that some men, for a variety of reasons, elect not to complete the SET. Likewise, when asked, some pastors may or may not agree to complete readily available personality evaluation instruments. A decision not to participate should not be used to prejudge a candidate.

STEP 9: KEEP YOUR CONGREGATION INFORMED

When the call packet is received from the district office ask the congregation to pray for the committee as they narrow the list to three or four candidates. When the list has been narrowed the call committee may share those three or four names and their biographical data with the congregation in preparation for candidate interviews or congregational voting. PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THE PROCEDURES OUTLINED IN YOUR CONSTITUTION TAKE PRECEDENCE for assembling your list to bring before the voters at the call meeting.

STEP 10: PRE-CALL INTERVIEWS

The Appendix F "GUIDELINES FOR ASSISTING CONGREGATIONS IN DEALING WITH PRE-CALL INTERVIEWS" may give you guidance in conducting pre-call interviews, if your congregation so desires. Your circuit visitor will be available to advise you in this matter also.

Your district president strongly encourages pre-call interviews, phone and face-to-face visits, on the basis of the account of the filling of an apostolic vacancy by the first group of Christian believers as described in Acts 1:15-26 and on the basis of the successful experience of many congregations who have chosen to follow this suggestion.

Though pre-call interviews may be desired by a congregation, all pastors do not desire to participate in them. Seek that understanding before boldly moving forward with questions.

Remember that the historic position of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod on the question of calling pastors is a theological position. We believe God has a pastor for our congregations and that, through the Holy Spirit, He will guide you to find this person for your congregation. For this reason, we always extend calls in the context of prayer for God's guidance. People of God have constantly recognized the limitations of their own human abilities to choose ministerial candidates correctly and have joyfully lived within the boundaries of that limitation, expecting God to act and speak through the minds of His people. Place no artificial barriers in the way of a Spirit-led process! Place no limitations on God's power to act!

Use every means available to develop as clear an understanding as possible of each candidate's unique qualifications. But remember that even with computerized facts, psychological tests, in-depth personal interviews and the like, apparent failures may occur. This at least suggests that these methods are not infallible.

Even a study of past performance leaves much to be desired, for there is no assurance that the same conditions exist that will permit a repetition of that past performance. Nor will you always know the reason why, at another time and place, a man did very well, or failed rather miserably. The facts of the past and face-to-face interviews are extremely important, when approached with the prayer that God will speak to and through the congregation in the calling process.

STEP 11: ESTABLISHMENT OF COMPENSATION AND A MINISTRY DESCRIPTION

Prior to the call Meeting, the appropriate board or committee should establish the salary and other fiscal compensation, vacation, education benefits, specialized needs and expectations, and a ministry description. There may be a need to make some individual adjustments, but the basic parameters should have been laid out. Appropriate allowances and provisions may be needed for specific areas of tenure and experience, e.g., Pastoral Leadership Institute (PLI), sabbatical or Post Seminary Applied Learning and Support (PALS). A copy of the District salary Guidelines is included as Appendix G to assist in determining appropriate compensation for church workers.

STEP 12: ESTABLISH THE DATE AND PROCEDURE FOR THE CALL MEETING

Once the call list is received, the process for evaluating each pastor's qualifications is completed, establish a date for a call meeting and make this date known, along with the call list, to the congregation.

The call meeting may be a Call Service. In the context of worship, the process of calling is very meaningful and uplifting. This service should be developed in consultation with the circuit visitor. See Appendix H-1 for a sample Call Meeting Worship.

Whether you call in the context of a worship service or a meeting, normally a written ballot should be used in the selection with the names of those being considered as clarified by your Constitution or agreed upon in Step 3. Voting by proxy is strongly discouraged. Absentee ballots should not be permitted. The basic intent is that the activity of balloting should reflect the latest and best information disclosed at the meeting. In addition, balloting takes place within the context of Scripture readings and prayers.

When one candidate has a majority, unless otherwise stipulated by the constitution of the congregation, the balloting is complete. If this is not achieved on the first ballot, the candidate with the least number of votes should be dropped and a second ballot taken. If a third ballot is required to achieve a majority, the congregation may follow the same procedure and continue until the necessary majority is achieved.

At the conclusion of the balloting, a resolution may be requested to make the selection unanimous. The President may say (while not required by our Constitution or Bylaws), *"I would be very happy to receive a motion to make the ballot unanimous."* The failure of such a resolution, by the way, would not invalidate the election. It is intended only as a sign of unity and commitment to a common cause.

STEP 13: IMMEDIATELY NOTIFY THE PASTOR-ELECT OF HIS SELECTION AND SEND THE PROPER CALL DOCUMENTS

The president of the congregation or the circuit visitor should attempt to notify the pastor-elect of his election immediately by phone while the meeting is still in session. If some unforeseen circumstance indicates that the pastor-elect cannot give serious consideration to the call, there would still be time to elect another.

Where others must participate in the call, as in the instance of financially assisted parishes, secure the proper congregational signatures on the documents and forward them to the other participants as quickly as possible. Normally the pastor-elect should be sent the Call Document and other supporting materials, documents and information within a day or two.

The call committee can download call documents at: <https://www.holybytes.com/cop/cornerstone/entities>

User name: 0000000067

Password (case sensitive): LonghornCats89

*The "Diploma of Vocation" (page 1) is to be printed on a piece of **parchment** paper. Once Call Documents have been completed, printed and signed, make 2 copies of all pages. Keep one copy for your records and send the other copy to the district president. Mail the original call documents by certified mail to the pastor elect.*

The calling congregation should also send a letter to the called pastor's present congregation asking for their prayers and cooperation in this process. As a matter of courtesy on the part of the circuit visitor or the congregation, also to notify the individuals who were under consideration, but not called. Send a very simple note to thank them for their patience and openness.

STEP 14: NOTIFY THE DISTRICT PRESIDENT THAT THE CALL HAS BEEN SENT

Even though a copy of the call documents has been sent to the office of the district president, it's also helpful to phone or email the news to the president's office. Keep your pastor-elect in

your prayers and be prepared to do all within your power to aid him in his decision. Your district president, area vice president and circuit visitor will do the same.

STEP 15a: IN CASE THE FIRST PASTOR YOU CALL DECLINES

It is entirely possible, as you might realize, that the first pastor you Call may, after due consideration, decline to accept the Call. It is important to keep the circuit visitor, area vice president, district president and mission and ministry facilitator informed of this development. The call committee normally consults with the circuit visitor and district president to form a recommendation about continuing with the current list of candidates or whether to pause in the process to add names to the list. It is also important for the individual members of your congregation to know that names may be offered to the call committee for consideration and reviewed by the district president up to a stated deadline.

STEP 15b: THE CALL IS ACCEPTED

Be in contact with your new pastor. Begin a process of transition by being flexible and supportive. There are many matters to address in his present ministry. This takes time. Don't wait for them (him, his wife & family) to ask for assistance, offer it. Issues like schools, finances, banking, grocery stores, doctors, immediate housing, etc., are all needs to be addressed. Show them the Christian love and support that led you to call him to be your pastor.

STEP 16: EXPRESSING THANKS AND APPRECIATION

Once your elected candidate has accepted the call to become your new pastor and been installed, one person you may wish to remember is the circuit visitor. He does not receive a stipend for his work as circuit visitor, unless he also serves as vacancy pastor, which involves separate responsibilities and appropriate compensation. Rather, he usually takes time away from his own work or from his family time to do the extra work of a circuit visitor guiding a congregation through the phases of the calling process. It is appropriate to plan some way of saying thanks to him for his ministry in your midst during the time of your pastoral vacancy.

SECTION V

BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A PASTOR AND A CONGREGATION

As the Call process unfolds, members experience a growing desire that the relationship about to be established between the congregation and the new pastor be as mutually beneficial and productive as possible. This desire is analogous to that experienced by a bride and groom as they enter into their new and unique relationship. Each recognizes and accepts that neither is perfect. There will be differences requiring understanding and adjustment by each. However, their hope is certain that, with God's help, they will overcome their differences through love and will work together toward common goals.

To make their hope a reality, the congregation must recognize that the covenant relationship established with their pastor through the Call process is in accord with God's plan. His plan is that each Christian serve God by serving one another and by communicating the love and forgiveness that is ours through Christ to the people in the world who do not yet have saving faith in Christ. The servant relationship makes it possible for the congregation and pastor to develop a level of trust and concern so that each desires to bear the other's burdens, to do good to one another as God instructs, and through such service to witness to their unity in Christ. Working early toward such a relationship means that there will be not only a good honeymoon, but a significant marriage between congregation and pastor.

In the Diploma of Vocation and in the self-study findings, the congregation identifies its corporate needs, priorities and expectations. By his acceptance, the pastor vows that, with God's help, he will serve the congregation, give it pastoral leadership and help the congregation achieve its mission and ministry objectives.

From the congregation's viewpoint, its needs, priorities and expectations are likely to be of primary importance. However, by its Call, the congregation commits itself, with God's help, to make every effort to meet the pastor's needs and expectations and to support him and his family. This commitment by the congregation is of equal importance to the congregation as it is to the pastor. When the congregation fulfills its commitment, it cements a feeling of oneness in Christ that encourages and motivates both the congregation and the pastor to strive to give their best to one another. The result is that both congregation and pastor serve the Lord as He intends.

The attitudes communicated by the congregation and perceived by the pastor and his family can enhance the prospects that the relationship between congregation and pastor will be a good one. The following are examples of communicating good attitudes:

- *We are happy that God has sent you to us. We desire to serve the Lord with you.*
- *We feel good about our strengths and are ready to improve our areas of weakness.*
- *We recognize that we are all imperfect human instruments of God. Pastor, we do not expect you to be great in everything either.*
- *We desire to make the best use of your time and talents, Pastor. We desire to use our talents to complement yours to achieve the congregation's mission and ministry objectives.*
- *We value you and your family and desire to assist all of you to become an integral part of our congregation and community. We will do our best to provide adequate financial support to enable you to accomplish your ministry and to provide for your family's needs.*

CONGREGATION - PASTOR RELATIONSHIP

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to supplement the comments already made concerning the congregation/pastor relationship, particularly with respect to the attitudes the congregation communicates to the pastor and his family.

The Desire to Serve the Lord Together

It is a warm and joyous feeling to be welcome and needed. This is even more so when the message expressed is the feeling that the Lord has sent you. There are many opportunities to make clear the congregation's desire to serve the Lord under the special pastoral leadership of the pastor being called. The thought here is to express orally and in writing your happiness and thanks that God, through His Holy Spirit, has led you to the particular person you are calling. Expressions of the value you place on him and his family and your desire to serve the Lord with them are especially meaningful.

The first opportunity to communicate your feelings occurs following the congregation's decision reached in the Call Meeting or Call Service. Normally, a telephone call is made to the pastor the same day, or next day, as appropriate. The next opportunity occurs in the letter transmitting the Diploma of Vocation and related documents. Other opportunities arise should the pastor visit the congregation prior to or after acceptance. Following installation, there is no end to the opportunities for sharing your feelings with the pastor and his family.

Willingness to Deal Honestly with Weakness

The areas in which the congregation needs strengthening are identified in the self-study. Often they are humanly difficult to deal with but can be most productive with God's help. What is required is a willingness to accept their reality and to strive to find solutions. Emphasis should be given to what can be done to overcome a weakness rather than to excuse, defend or lay blame for it. The pastor is encouraged and inspired when the congregation communicates that it feels good about itself, the opportunities or challenges it recognizes, its strengths and the talents available, and that it is anxious to get on with its ministries.

The Pastor Is Human, Too

Do not expect the impossible! Avoid making the pastor feel guilty or defensive. The congregation has every right to expect the pastor to administer the Office of the Keys and carry out the pastoral duties enumerated in the Diploma of Vocation. At the same time, the pastor is human and is unlikely to have all the talents to the degree necessary to perform all of his assigned responsibilities equally well. Encourage and allow him to be himself and to call upon the lay talents available to complement his ministry in those areas in which others may be better qualified. In the most productive relationship, the congregation and pastor recognize and agree upon those talents best provided by the pastor and the laity.

Best Use of the Pastor's Time

Demands on a pastor's time frequently exceed the amount of time available. Needs by individual members for pastoral assistance due to personal crisis, death of a family member,

illness, surgery, accident, etc., often arise unexpectedly. Events such as meetings of the Council, Voters and Elders often require the pastor's presence. Also, the pastor must have time for planning worship services, sermon preparation, counseling of members, confirmation and new member instruction, weddings and travel to and from the activities cited.

However, there are other activities and meetings where only his occasional presence is essential. Good stewardship requires that there be determination and agreement as to the best use of the pastor's time and talents. Many ministry needs can be met by the laity under the pastor's direction. Such complementary ministry strengthens the body of Christ and, in the process, God is glorified.

Assisting the Pastor and His Family

The Call documents sent to the pastor normally include materials to help orient him to the congregation and community. Examples are:

- A brief history of the congregation
- A congregational directory and pictorial directory if available
- A copy of the congregational newsletter or similar periodic communication sent to the members
- A copy of the Constitution and Bylaws
- A copy of the current budget
- A description of current congregational objectives, policies and decisions or plans that the pastor would be expected to support or carry out
- Self-study findings
- A current, detailed map of the area the congregation serves indicating the location of hospitals members generally use; area in which most members reside; and schools most members' children attend
- A brief explanation of the type of community served, types of housing available and current price ranges

It is also helpful to make clear what expenses the congregation will pay (transportation, lodging, meals, etc.) and if his wife's expenses will be included, should the pastor decide to visit prior to acceptance of the Call or to locate housing.

It may be very helpful if the congregation designates a competent member who offers his/her services to assist the pastor with relocation. Referral of the pastor to a local realtor is usually most helpful. The realtor will be familiar with local mortgage companies, rates and other valuable information. The congregation will already have decided what commitment it is prepared to make regarding the pastor's housing allowances.

The pastor should be offered the opportunity to meet with the Council and Call Committee. The purpose of this meeting is to answer questions either the congregation or pastor might wish to raise, and to acquaint him with local customs and informal processes of decision-making and communication normally followed in the congregation.

After installation, the Council should have ready for the pastor a briefing that includes written summaries of the plans of the congregation and boards, and a talent inventory of members. The briefing should include any special ministries, such as a list of members who are shut-in and background data on each.

Recognize that it will take the pastor several months or more, depending on the size of the congregation, to get to know each member as an individual and to gain an understanding of the skills each has to offer. About six months after the pastor's installation might be an

appropriate time to review with him the Diploma of Vocation and the congregation's self-study findings, existing plans and objectives.

Throughout the orientation process, the pastor's wife and family should be remembered and included, when appropriate, in orientation events and invited to join or participate in congregational activities and organizations.

Providing the pastor and his family the kinds of assistance described is one of the ways the congregation communicates its love for them and its thanks to God for having sent them. It helps them to become productive members of the congregation more quickly. It also helps to establish a level of trust and open communication.

Support for the Pastor's Work and His Family

One of the ingredients of the Call is the remuneration and related benefits offered the pastor for support of his work and his family. Financial items related to the pastoral office in a congregation usually include:

- Concordia Plan Services (Concordia Health and Retirement Plans)
- Automobile allowance
- Housing allowance or provision of a parsonage
- Utility allowance
- Salary
- Social Security (FICA)/403 (B)
- Continuing education allowance
- Library allowance
- Pulpit substitute allowance (Sickness and/or vacation)
- Sabbatical (three months encouraged after seven years of service)
- PLI (Pastoral Leadership Institute)
- PALS (Post-Seminary Applied Learning and Support) - for all new seminary grads

The Pastor's Family Time

The pastor has the same God-given responsibilities toward his wife and family as does every Christian. It is essential that there be regularly scheduled time set aside each week for this purpose.

There should also be a definite amount of annual vacation time authorized that the pastor and his family can count on and plan to use as they wish.

Evaluation of the Pastor's Needs

An important ingredient in the congregation/pastor relationship is to fix responsibility for an annual evaluation of the pastor's needs and that of his family. The evaluation should include recommendations to the Budget Committee for appropriate revisions in each of the elements that relate to the financial support provided the pastor. He should participate in the evaluation and furnish data regarding expenses. Responsibility for initiating the evaluation and preparing recommendations could be placed with the Board of Elders since this board has a close and continuing working relationship with the pastor.

References

There are a number of helpful references to serve as a guide to the Call Committee and congregation in preparing the information referred to in this Section. The references below

are limited to those that must normally be secured from the Synod, the Texas District or the Federal Internal Revenue Service.

- LCMS Concordia Plan Services (1/888-927-7526)
- LCMS Tax and General Information Bulletin
- Texas District Salary & Allowance Guideline (TX District Treasurer 512-926-4272)
- Church and Clergy Finance Newsletter
- IRS Publication -- Your Federal Income Tax
- IRS Publication -- Social Security for Members of the Clergy Religious Workers
-

APPENDIX A

SAMPLE RESOLUTION: ESTABLISHING A CONGREGATION'S CALL PROCESS

Whereas, (Name of congregation) is now without the ministry of a resident pastor and/or desires to Call another; and

Whereas, the procedures for Calling a pastor should conform to Scriptural guidelines, should derive from the good experience of other congregations and should become a process that unites us as a congregation; therefore be it

Resolved, that as a congregation, we follow in general the process suggested in the document, "Calling a Pastor," as presented to us by the President of the Texas District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod; be it further

Resolved, that we encourage individual members of the congregation to nominate for consideration qualified pastors of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod who appear to possess the skills, abilities, qualifications and experiences needed by our congregation; be it further

Resolved, that we publish the list of names so received and forward the names to the President of the Texas District, along with a statement of our expectations for the ministry of a pastor among us; be it further

Resolved, that we request the District President to review the names submitted by our congregation and to respond from that list and from other names known to him with a list of candidates for our adoption as the official Call List; be it further

Resolved, that we urge our Call Committee to share with each member of the congregation as much pertinent information on each candidate as possible; and be it finally

Resolved, that we invite Circuit Visitor (Name) to conduct a Call Service, during which time, in the setting of appropriate readings, hymns and prayers, we elect, according to the procedures of our Constitution and Bylaws, an individual to serve as pastor of this congregation.

APPENDIX B

Pastor Profile

Texas District, LCMS



Welcome to the Pastoral Profile Survey!

This survey seeks to clarify what your congregation's members believe to be the key roles, functions, attributes, and qualities of the next pastor who will be called. Your responses to this survey will provide information that will help in the process of identifying one or more pastors who are suited for your congregation's ministry and would, therefore, be good candidates.

Please answer all questions, carefully following instructions. When you have completed this survey, please submit it according to your congregation's call committee instructions. Your responses will then be recorded.

1. Which of the following statements BEST describes the purpose for which your congregation exists? Please choose only one.
- a. ☐ Provide a place for God's people to worship
 - b. ☐ Preach and teach God's Word in truth and purity and administer the sacraments
 - c. ☐ Reach out into the community with the pure truth of God's Word to make disciples of those who are not believers
 - d. ☐ Pass the truth of God's Word down to the next generation
 - e. ☐ Support identified community needs and charitable causes to make our neighborhood a better place

COMMENTS:

2. Your congregation is currently effective at fulfilling the purpose chosen in question 1.
- a. ☐ Yes
 - b. ☐ No

COMMENTS:

3. Which of the following BEST describes the current state of your congregation? Please choose only one.
- a. ☐ Declining rapidly
 - b. ☐ Declining slowly
 - c. ☐ Stable
 - d. ☐ Growing slowly
 - e. ☐ Growing rapidly

COMMENTS:

4. All congregations experience conflict. Which of the following BEST describes the level of conflict in your congregation at this time? Please choose only one.
- a. ☐ Very low
 - b. ☐ Low
 - c. ☐ Moderate
 - d. ☐ High
 - e. ☐ Very high

COMMENTS:

5. Which of the following BEST describes your willingness to have your congregation change so that it can better accomplish its purpose? Please choose only one.
- a. ☐ Nothing about our congregation should change
 - b. ☐ Minor needed changes that do not compromise God's Word are acceptable, so long as they cause only slight discomfort
 - c. ☐ Major needed changes that do not compromise God's Word are acceptable, even if they cause moderate discomfort
 - d. ☐ Substantial needed changes that do not compromise God's Word are acceptable, even if they cause significant discomfort

COMMENTS:

6. Considering all sources of gross personal income, what percentage do you believe the typical member contributes to your congregation? Please choose only one.
- a. ☐ 0-4%
 - b. ☐ 5-9%
 - c. ☐ 10%
 - d. ☐ 11% or more

COMMENTS:

7. Not including worship services, how many hours per month do you believe the typical member participates in your church's Bible study or service activities? Please choose only one.
- a. ☐ 0-2
 - b. ☐ 3-6
 - c. ☐ 6-9
 - d. ☐ 10 or more

COMMENTS:

8. How willing do you believe the typical member is to increase the percentage indicated in question 6 and/or the hours indicated in question 7 so that your congregation may better fulfill its purpose? Please choose only one.
- a. ☐ Not willing

- b. ☐ A little willing
- c. ☐ Moderately willing
- d. ☐ Very willing

COMMENTS:

9. Which of the following opportunities should your congregation pursue to fulfill its purpose? Please choose as many as are applicable.
- a. ☐ Initiating or continuing a community social or charitable ministry
 - b. ☐ Community engagement to reach those without saving faith
 - c. ☐ A different style of worship service than what we currently offer
 - d. ☐ Initiating or continuing a “preaching station” in another area of the community (a neighborhood, nursing home, someone’s home, etc.)
 - e. ☐ Planting a new congregation in the area
 - f. ☐ Partnering with another congregation to plant a congregation in the area
 - g. ☐ Encouraging and supporting gifted individuals to become Texas District–LCMS certified Evangelists
 - h. ☐ Encouraging and supporting gifted individuals to become pastors or other LCMS-trained church workers
 - i. ☐ Other, please specify:

COMMENTS:

10. Which of the following BEST describes the style of worship you prefer? Please choose only one.
- a. ☐ Traditional—utilizing a Synod-approved hymnal, hymnody, and either organ or piano
 - b. ☐ Contemporary—utilizing current Christian music and instrumentation such as keyboards, guitars, and drums
 - c. ☐ Blended—utilizing elements of both traditional and contemporary worship, as described above

COMMENTS:

11. Would you support your congregation offering a worship style OTHER than the preference you indicated in question 10, so long as the preference you indicated in question 10 IS offered?
- a. ☐ Yes
 - b. ☐ No

COMMENTS:

12. Which of the following pastoral skills is MOST important to your congregation at THIS time? Please choose only one.
- a. ☐ Visionary: Can create and articulate a picture of a preferred future for our congregation
 - b. ☐ Planner and administrator: Maps out objectives, plans overall organizational strategies and designs programs with a focus on developing a strategy for mission and ministry and sees to implementation

- c. ☐ Innovator: Creatively envisions and implements new approaches to conducting ministry and initiates the change necessary to accomplish them
- d. ☐ Caregiver: Effectively cares for the spiritual needs of the congregation
- e. ☐ Leadership developer: Enlists, equips, and motivates people to use their gifts for servant roles in God's Kingdom work, including being leaders who help others develop their gifts, and then delegates appropriate responsibilities to them

COMMENTS:

13. Congregations often have areas of ministry that are of particular importance or emphasis. Which of the following areas require particular skill from your next pastor? Please choose as many as are applicable.
- a. ☐ Congregational leadership and administration
 - b. ☐ Community leadership
 - c. ☐ Leadership of contemporary worship
 - d. ☐ Skills in cross-cultural ministry
 - e. ☐ Youth work
 - f. ☐ Small group leadership and development
 - g. ☐ Visitation and care of the elderly
 - h. ☐ Evangelistic outreach
 - i. ☐ Other, please specify:

COMMENTS:

14. Which of the following BEST describes your congregation's practice for the administration of Holy Communion? Please choose only one.
- a. ☐ Our congregation administers the Lord's Supper only to communicant members of this congregation, of other LCMS congregations, and to members of congregations in altar and pulpit fellowship with the LCMS. No exceptions to this practice.
 - b. ☐ Our congregation administers the Lord's Supper only to communicant members of this congregation, of other LCMS congregations, and to members of congregations in altar and pulpit fellowship with the LCMS. Discretion is given to pastor and elders to commune others in extraordinary situations and circumstances.
 - c. ☐ Our congregation administers the Lord's Supper to baptized believers who confess their sins and come to the communion table after being informed concerning what the LCMS believes, teaches and confesses about this sacrament.

COMMENTS:

15. Please place any other comments the call committee should consider in the space below:



APPENDIX C

DOING A SELF-STUDY OF YOUR CONGREGATION'S LIFE, MINISTRY AND MISSION

Congregations are encouraged to reflect on their mission and strategy in order to identify their needs and opportunities for ministry. Such self-study is best followed by setting appropriate goals, establishing priorities and developing plans. Under the leadership of the Spirit of God, these activities will lead congregations toward greater faithfulness and effectiveness in accomplishing God's mission and ministry.

This self-study package contains four tools:

1. "Toward Measurement of Congregational Health"

One person or small committee gathers some basic congregational data. Four diagnostic indicators in the area of worship, Bible study, outreach and service provide clues to congregational health.

2. "Toward Identifying Needs for Ministry"

One person or small committee gathers additional data that helps to provide a clearer picture of the congregation and its priorities.

3. "The Major Areas of Our Congregation's Life and Ministry"

The church council or board of elders may be asked to complete this section.

4. "Additional Resources"

Your circuit visitor is your primary resource person. Your mission and ministry facilitator (MMF) can also provide other resources useful in assessing congregational health, pastoral needs and community demographics. Contact him for this assistance.

Congregational leaders may then study and interpret the information gathered by these tools, identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the congregation and the needs, and opportunities for ministry. (Share the information and the interpretation with congregation members and receive their responses.)

It is recommended that an experienced resource person from outside the congregation be invited to study and interpret the information gathered by these tools. Your MMF may be helpful in this process.

From the study and interpretation, the congregation may then move on to goal setting, prioritizing and planning for ministry.

NOTE: IT IS EXTREMELY HELPFUL FOR THE PASTOR CALLED BY YOUR CONGREGATION TO RECEIVE THESE STUDIES, ALONG WITH THE OFFICIAL CALL DOCUMENTS IN SECTION V.

I. TOWARD MEASUREMENT OF CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH

By the Gospel (in Word and Sacrament), the Holy Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies the Holy Christian Church and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In the church He daily and richly forgives all sins to all believers.

This activity of the Holy Spirit is experienced in a congregation of God's called and gathered people. As the Spirit enlightens, sanctifies and keeps His people by worship and the nurture of the Gospel, He motivates and equips them for His/their ministry of witness and service (to one another and to others).

A healthy congregation is one in which "the Gospel is preached in its purity and the Holy Sacraments are administered according to the Gospel" (Augsburg Confession VII); one in which the people are meaningfully involved in worship, nurture, witness, service and outreach.

The health of a congregation is difficult to measure, since it has to do with worshipping God "in Spirit and in truth" **John 4:23** and with nurture/growth in faith and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ toward "mature manhood" and toward "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." **Ephesians 4:13**

However, there are indicators of congregational health that can be measured. It is something like the human body. Such things as body temperature are clues or indicators of health or illness, but do not by themselves prove health nor identify an illness. Similarly, the indicators of congregational health used in this instrument are items of information that give CLUES about the health of a congregation, but do not by themselves prove health nor identify a problem. These indicators require further probing and more thorough interpretation.

Such probing and interpreting usually is most helpful when both the members of the congregation and "outsiders" take a common look at the indicators. In taking this common look, a congregation's indicators should be compared only with that congregation's indicators of other years, not with other congregations' indicators.

On the following chart, the "Tomorrow" columns may be used to project current trends, to set desired goals or may be omitted.

THE HEALTH OF A CONGREGATION
Diagnostic Indicators

	YESTERDAY						TODAY	TOMORROW		
	10 yrs ago	5 yrs ago	4 yrs ago	3 yrs ago	2 yrs ago	1 yr ago	NOW	1 yr from now	2 yrs from now	5 yrs from now
A. Basic Data										
1. Baptized Members (total membership)										
2. Nonconfirmed Members (Baptized Only)										
3. Confirmed Members (Baptized & Confirmed)										
4. Confirmed as % of Baptized										
5. Composite Membership										
B. Three Key Indicators										
1. Average Sunday Worship Attendance										
% of Baptized										
2. Average Weekly Bible Study Attendance										
% of Baptized										
3. Average Weekly Giving per Worship Attendance (divide average weekly contributions by avg. worship attendance)										

II. TOWARD IDENTIFYING NEEDS FOR MINISTRY

1. What is the number of your resident members in each of the following age categories?

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| a. 0 - 5 _____ | i. 71 - 80 _____ |
| b. 6 - 10 _____ | j. 81 - 90 _____ |
| c. 11 - 20 _____ | k. 91 - 100 _____ |
| d. 21 - 30 _____ | l. 100 + _____ |
| e. 31 - 40 _____ | |
| f. 41 - 50 _____ | |
| g. 51 - 60 _____ | |
| h. 61 - 70 _____ | |

2. What is the number of your resident members in each of the following categories?

- a. _____ Husbands and wives living together with children under 18 at home
- b. _____ Husbands and wives living together with no children under 18 living at home
- c. _____ Single Adults
- d. _____ Widows and widowers living alone
- e. _____ One-parent households with children at home
- f. _____ Others

3. What percentage of the congregation's membership is from minority groups? _____%

4. What is the median age of the congregation's membership? (1/2 this age or older and 1/2 this age or younger.)

Median Age: _____

5. What percentage of the congregation's dollar receipts was given to mission and ministry outside the congregation for each of the last 5 years?

5 years ago _____ 4 years ago _____ 3 years ago _____

2 years ago _____ Last year _____

6. What percentage of the giving units accounted for 50% of the dollar receipts from the membership last year? _____%

7. List the names and dates (years of service of pastors who have served this congregation since its founding.)

III. THE MAJOR AREAS OF OUR CONGREGATION'S LIFE AND MINISTRY

WORSHIP

1. The following resources are often used in our worship service(s): (check all that apply)

____ Lutheran Service Book ____ Lutheran Worship ____ The Lutheran Hymnal
____ LSB Service Builder ____ Write Own ____ CCLI Song Select

Other (list resources):

2. Our children/youth are involved in worship by:

3. Our congregation's primary worship practices: (Check all that apply)

____ Traditional ____ Contemporary ____ Highly Liturgical ____ Blended

4. These choirs, musical groups and organists are active in our congregation:

5. Lay people in our congregation serve in the following worship roles (check all that apply):

____ Acolytes ____ Ushers ____ Readers ____ Worship Assistants

____ Worship Leaders ____ Greeters ____ Altar Guild

____ Communion Assistants: ____ Men ____ Women

____ Other (list):

7. The percentage of our members who communed at least once in the previous year is:

Communed Once

Confirmed Membership x 100 = ____%

8. We use the following media in our worship services:

_____ Organ

_____ Piano

_____ Guitar

_____ Keyboard

_____ Projection on screens

_____ Wireless Microphones

_____ Wired Microphones

_____ Printed Order of Service

_____ Hymnal

_____ Other instruments (list):

Other media:

9. Other information about our worship style or structure we want our pastor elect to know:

LEADERSHIP ROLES

What leadership roles do you have in your congregation and who serves in those roles (check the roles the congregation has and who may serve)?

____ Voting members:

____ Men ____ Women

____ Congregational President:

____ Men ____ Women

____ Elders:

____ Men ____ Women

____ Board Chairs:

____ Men ____ Women

____ Board Members:

____ Men ____ Women

____ Treasurer:

____ Men ____ Women

____ Adult Bible Class Leader

____ Men ____ Women

____ Confirmation Teacher

____ Men ____ Women

____ Other, please specify:

EVANGELISM AND WORLD MISSIONS

1. Our mission or purpose statement is:

2. We conduct these intentional outreach activities (List activities and number of people involved in each. -- The question to be answered here is: what activities/ministries are our congregation doing that help bring people to Christ?):

Activity:	Number involved:
a. _____	_____
b. _____	_____
c. _____	_____
d. _____	_____
e. _____	_____

3. Our congregation makes visitors feel welcome at our church by:

4. The number of Adult Confirmation Classes we conduct annually is _____.

Who teaches these classes? (e.g., pastor(s), DCE, layperson)

The number of adults we confirmed in each of the last four years is:

_____ Year	_____ # of Adults
_____ Year	_____ # of Adults
_____ Year	_____ # of Adults
_____ Year	_____ # of Adults

5. Our congregation is involved in ministry in the:
_____ community _____ state _____ nation _____ world

Note ministries here:

CHRISTIAN NURTURE

1. These ministries are active in our congregation (check all that apply):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunday School | <input type="checkbox"/> Small Groups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Bible Class | <input type="checkbox"/> Mothers' Day Out |
| <input type="checkbox"/> V.B.S. | <input type="checkbox"/> LWML (or other Women's Ministry) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Midweek School | <input type="checkbox"/> LLL (or other Men's Ministry) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Young Adult Ministry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christian Day School | <input type="checkbox"/> Early childhood ministry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stephen Ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Campus Ministry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please list): | |

2. We offer adults these formal programs for Christian growth and/or Bible Study:

3. How many confirmed members are in the congregation? _____
4. How many confirmed members are involved in organized Bible Study? _____
5. How many baptized children—not yet confirmed—are in the congregation? _____
6. How many of these baptized children are involved in Sunday school? _____

FELLOWSHIP

1. We incorporate (assimilate) new members into the fellowship of our congregation by:

2. These fellowship groups are active in our congregation:
(e.g., senior - singles - couples - other)

3. We held these fellowship activities in the last year:

4. These activity groups are active in our congregation:
(e.g., scouting - athletics - quilting - exercise - other)

5. We have had conflicts in our congregation that have influenced our church life and have disrupted unity. These are the events and the results:

STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE

1. Members are asked to make a financial and service commitment annually by:
2. We teach Christian stewardship in our congregation by:
3. Our congregation teaches and practices the principle of tithing. ☒ Yes ☐ No
4. Our budget is developed by ... (what group or individual):
5. The number of giving units (e.g., husband and wife/single adults) we have is:
6. Our budget allocations are shown by these percentages:

Missions	_____ %
Education	_____ %
Salaries	_____ %
Worship	_____ %
Facility & Utilities	_____ %
Debt	_____ %
Youth Ministries	_____ %
Care Ministries	_____ %

- a. Our day school budget is \$_____.
- b. Our total current capital indebtedness is \$_____.

7. Our Per-Communicant giving:

Contributions (All Purposes) = \$_____ per communicant
No. of Communicant Members

8. The sources of our income are (Check all that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> Members' Gifts	<input type="checkbox"/> Rentals
<input type="checkbox"/> Endowments	<input type="checkbox"/> Bequests
<input type="checkbox"/> Tuition	<input type="checkbox"/> Fund Raisers
<input type="checkbox"/> Investment Income	<input type="checkbox"/> Memorials
<u> </u> Other:	

9. Our total budget over the past four years:

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>BUDGETED</u>	<u>RECEIVED</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

10. Total amount of money sent for missions through District/Synod last year: \$_____

11. Total amount of money sent for missions directly to Synod last year: \$_____

12. Total amount of money sent to missions other than through district or synod last year:
\$_____

13. Our congregation has a parsonage for the pastor ☐_Yes ☐_No

SERVICE

1. Our congregation helps its members identify and use their talents and gifts by:

2. Our congregation has served the human needs of our community (e.g., poor - homeless - unemployed - disasters) by:

3. Our congregation is organized to meet the physical needs of its members by:

4. These community groups are active in our building:
(e.g., A.A., Bloodmobile, service organizations, other)

Please attach a copy of your Constitution and Bylaws.

ONE CONGREGATION'S UNDERSTANDING OF ITSELF AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE PASTOR

The following paragraphs offer a way in which one congregation (Fictional name: Shalom Lutheran Church) gave expression to its understanding about its own history, direction and needs, and how these translated into a set of expectations for its next pastor.

OUR PERSPECTIVE OF SHALOM LUTHERAN CHURCH'S MINISTRIES AND PASTORAL NEEDS

During our ____year history, we have been richly blessed with pastors who, through the leading of the Holy Spirit, have preached and taught God's Word to us, and who have faithfully administered the Sacraments for our spiritual strengthening. We pray for a pastor who will continue to serve the Lord at Shalom Lutheran Church in this same manner.

Also, we have been blessed by stimulating and varied settings for worship. Our Director of Music, _____, serves a dual calling to the church and to Shalom Lutheran School. He actively participates with the pastor in planning worship services around a variety of Lutheran liturgies that often includes choirs and accompaniment by piano, organ, stringed and brass instruments. As yet, we have not planned for purchasing the new hymnal, but we anticipate beginning the process soon. Presently, we have a single worship on Sunday, although if our growth in attendance continues, we will return to two services because of seating and parking limitations. We pray for a pastor who enjoys variety in worship and who will continue to lead in its planning and preparation.

Our congregation follows a planning process for most of its 10 departments that is structured according to program areas and long-range and short-range objectives. The programs are being implemented by lay leadership and active committees involving more than 125 people. The scope and effectiveness of this planning process will benefit from a continuing pastoral involvement in which the pastor serves as a resource person in planning and a motivator in attaining successful implementation. We pray for a pastor who has leadership and organizational skills to help provide ideas, give encouragement and develop the God-given skills of members.

Shalom Lutheran Church places much emphasis on Christian education. We support Shalom Lutheran School, which has a program for kindergarten through grade eight. For adults we normally have two Sunday morning Bible studies, four mid-week Bible studies in homes, and a core of members who have been trained and are capable of leading studies. Our Sunday school in the pre-confirmation ages could benefit from regular pastoral involvement in teaching God's Word and encouraging its study. In addition, our worship service has occasionally included special object lessons and songs for young children, and this has been a special blessing to our youth. We pray for a pastor who supports Christian education at all age levels and will be an active participant in both our parish and parochial education program.

Our congregation, perhaps because of its urban setting, has need for all types of counseling. The membership has benefited from skilled professional counseling by our previous pastor and the congregation has supported seminars and workshops for improving his counseling skills. We pray for a pastor who is willing and able to counsel others.

Our area is also one where people move rather frequently. We perceive our congregation as being very friendly toward strangers and welcome those who visit and those who wish to join us. We have a process administered by the board of elders for introducing, informing and integrating new members into active parish life. We welcome members of all nationalities and ethnic backgrounds and in recent years we have been blessed by an increasingly diverse heritage. Usually new members are asked to participate in important committees within a few months after joining. Among our organizations that provide fellowship opportunities, along with other important functions, are the Mary and Martha Guild, made up of five circles, the Shalom Adult Fellowship, the Young Adult Fellowship, the Lutheran Youth Fellowship, Scouting, adult and youth choirs, and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Branches. We pray for a pastor who is warm, friendly and loving in his interaction with people and who can stimulate those feelings in others. We also pray for a pastor who values fellowship and has the capacity to direct its use to the spiritual up building of our members.

Historically, we have been served by a staff consisting of the pastor, a part-time (called) director of music, a full-time secretary and a part-time janitor. The seven teachers who belong to Shalom have voluntarily teamed together to support the pastor and have followed the practice of meeting at least twice a year to evaluate their roles in the parish. Recently, we began the process of calling an associate pastor to work primarily in Christian education and youth ministry. This process has now been stopped until the senior pastoral office is again filled. At that time we probably will be receptive to calling a second pastor. We pray for a pastor with physical abilities by way of age, health and stamina to deal with our challenging ministry. We further pray that he will be able to work effectively with other professional staff, such as the school faculty and a possible second pastor.

In summary, we pray for a pastor who is filled with the Holy Spirit to teach us, lead us and stimulate us to grow in Christ and to know Him better and, in knowing Him better, to help others to know Him also. These things are our prayers, but above all, we pray that God's will may be done to His glory.

Yours in Christ,

Call Committee

, Chairman

APPENDIX D

SPECIAL NOTE TO FINANCIALLY ASSISTED CONGREGATIONS

This special note is for congregations receiving financial assistance from the Board of Mission Administration (BMA)

The BMA is responsible to the District to provide financial support for new congregations, for specialized and high service ministries, and for beginning new work in areas in which our Church currently is not exercising a witness to our Lord and Savior. In order to fulfill this responsibility, the BMA has very carefully appropriated the funds made available to it. The BMA has adopted operating policies regarding the amount of support and when that support will stop. In this way, it is hoped that more funds will be made available to establish new congregations and to explore new mission endeavors.

The BMA affirms the right of every chartered congregation to extend a Call to the pastor who seems best qualified to fulfill its needs. The BMA does not wish to interfere in any way with the exercise of the right of the individual congregation. In exercising its overall responsibility to the congregations of the Texas District, the BMA needs to be consulted early on in the process. The Area MMF will usually work very closely with financially assisted congregations to help them in selecting an appropriate mission-minded pastor who will be able to guide the congregation in becoming self-sufficient and healthy. If the financially assisted congregation is not chartered, the BMA will have to issue the Call. This is one reason to work closely with your MMF who will bring the request to the BMA.

Your Mission and Ministry Facilitators / Mission Support Specialists:

Texas District, LCMS
1221 Satellite View
Round Rock, TX 78665

Office: 800-951-3478
512-926-4272
Fax: 512-926-1006

Area A

Rev. Lincon Guerra
lincon@txlcms.org
Cell: 515-528-0025

Area B

Rev. Ben Gonzales
bgonzales@txlcms.org
Cell: 832-331-0951

Area C

Mr. Larry Rietz
lrietz@txlcms.org
Cell: 512-954-2104

Area D

Rev. Dr. David Bahn
david.bahn@txlcms.org
Cell: 281-450-5414

APPENDIX E

NOMINATION FORM FOR PASTORAL CALL LIST

Generally, men who have served less than three years in their present parish should not be considered as viable candidates, nor should your Vacancy Pastor/Intentional Interim Pastor, Circuit Visitor or other pastors of churches in your Circuit.

Those who wish to suggest names of pastors to be considered for our Call List are asked to please complete this form. When it is completed, give it to an elder or the chairman of the Call Committee. It will be forwarded to the District President's office. Be sure to sign this form before returning it.

1. Having carefully and prayerfully considered the pastoral needs of our congregation, I wish to nominate the following candidate to be considered for a pastoral call to our congregation:

Name of Candidate: _____

Present Place of Ministry: _____
Congregation City State

2. I believe this man will meet our congregational needs for the following reasons:

3. My understanding of this man's characteristics and ministry approaches are as follows:

Pastoral approach: _____

Theological position: _____

Strong points: _____

Weak points: _____

Other comments: _____

4. Please state whether you know this pastor personally, where you met him and how long you have known him.

5. If you do not know this pastor personally, please state the source of your information on the basis of which you are making your nomination.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

APPENDIX F
GUIDELINES
for
Assisting Congregations in Dealing with
Pre-Call Interviews

The following guidelines have been prepared and adopted by the Council of Presidents for use by the congregations of the Synod. They are intended for those instances when a congregation chooses to interview candidates for the office of pastor before extending him a solemn call.

PREAMBLE¹

Believing that servants in the office of the public ministry administer the means of grace through which God brings to individuals the benefits of Jesus' ministry, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod deems the personal suitability and preparedness of the person who bears that office and responsibility to be of high import. Heeding the Holy Scripture, the LCMS therefore declares that such a person must be a baptized Christian man who is exemplary in his faith in the forgiveness of sins and in a sanctified life that is “above reproach.” By natural endowment and from education, he must be “apt to teach,” having intellectual command of the doctrines of Scripture and the ability, under the leading of the Holy Spirit, to apply and communicate them. He must have his own household in order and demonstrate his aptitude to serve the church as a wise leader in worship, pastoral care, admonition, teaching, evangelization, and works of charity.

PRESUPPOSITIONS

- 1) The decision to call a pastor is among the most important that a congregation ever makes.
- 2) In recent years, congregations have sought more information about candidates on a call list. As a result, some congregations are conducting interviews before issuing a call.
- 3) Pre-call interviews are neither commanded nor forbidden by Holy Scripture or the Lutheran Confessions. However, if a congregation chooses to conduct pre-call interviews, great care should be exercised so that consciences are not offended.
- 4) The objective of conducting pre-call interviews should be to become more familiar with the candidate's theology, interests, experience, skills, and leadership style, so that the congregation can equip itself to make an informed decision at its call meeting.
- 5) Pre-call interviews can be a valuable component of the call process in special circumstances (e.g., team ministry situations).
- 6) Pre-call interviews also involve risks.

¹ The Preamble is based upon “Scriptural Standards and Ecclesiastical Expectations for Servants in the Office of the Public Ministry,” a document adopted by the Council of Presidents in 1989. (Note: The call committee is encouraged to obtain and use a copy of this longer document in its work. Copies are available from the district president.)

- a. Answers to written or telephone interviews may give a misleading picture. The pastor and the congregation may not present themselves as they really are.
- b. Personal interviews can place undue emphasis on the outward aspects of the call (e.g. appearance of the sanctuary, the condition of parsonage, the neighborhood, the community, the people, etc.) rather than on the challenges and opportunities for mission and ministry. Furthermore, personal interviews can be very expensive.
- c. Not every LCMS pastor will submit to an interview. Some excellent candidates, who will not participate in an interview, may thereby be eliminated from consideration.

GUIDELINES

- 1) Congregations should wait to decide on whether or not to conduct pre-call interviews until after they have received their call list and have reviewed the information provided by the district president.
- 2) Pre-call interviews should only be conducted with those individuals who are named on the call list provided by the district president.
- 3) A pre-call interview may supplement the information/advice supplied by the district president and should only be done with his knowledge and approval.
- 4) A pre-call interview should not be conducted until after the congregation has completed a careful and thorough self-study.
- 5) Congregations choosing to conduct pre-call interviews will be careful to maintain the dignity and divine nature of the call. When calling a pastor, congregations are not hiring an employee, but asking God to send them a pastor.
- 6) Congregations will surround the entire call process with fervent prayer.
- 7) Pre-call interviews may be conducted by letter, by telephone, or through a face-to-face visit.
- 8) The actual interviewing will normally be done by members of the call committee. (The call committee and the interview committee may be the same group of individuals, or two different groups of individuals, or a sub-committee of the call committee as the congregation directs or as the call committee structures itself for its work. Throughout this document, it is understood that references to "the committee" speak of the group—whatever its title—that undertakes the interviewing task.)
 - a. If the congregation's constitution does not provide for a call committee, an enabling resolution should be adopted by the voters' assembly establishing both the make-up and the duties of the call committee.
 - b. The congregation should outline for the interview committee the kind of report or recommendation it expects from the call committee.
 - c. The candidates for interview will be taken from the call list as prepared by the district president.
- 9) The interview committee will be careful to conduct each candidate interview in the same way. The committee should limit the number of questions addressed to the candidates. The same person should ask the questions of each of the candidates.

- 10) A written summary of each interview should be made and distributed to each member of the call committee. It is from these summaries that a report can be made to the congregation.
- 11) As a matter of courtesy, congregations will communicate with each candidate who has been interviewed, expressing appreciation for his participation.
- 12) Congregations will work closely with the district president and the circuit visitor in carrying out the interview process.
 - a. If personal or telephone interviews are used, the district president or his representative should be invited to participate in the actual interviews.
 - b. If telephone or letter interviews are used, the district president or his representative should have opportunity to review the interview questions and make suggestions for change or improvement.

FORMULATING THE INTERVIEW

- 1) As part of the call process, whether interviews are used or not, the congregation needs to have a clear understanding of its mission and ministry and its current situation. Therefore, a careful and thorough congregational self-study is essential and should serve as the basis for developing the interview format.
- 2) In order for the congregation to have ownership in the results of the interview process, it should be given the opportunity to submit questions or subjects to the call committee to be touched upon in the interviews.
- 3) The call committee will be responsible for formulating the final list of areas/questions to be addressed in the interviews.
- 4) The approach needs to be framed carefully so that the ground to be covered can be accomplished in the allotted time.
- 5) Each interview statement should be written down and then evaluated in three ways:
 - a. What does it have to do with the position?
 - b. Why do we need to know?
 - c. Would we be willing to answer the same question about ourselves?
- 6) It is best to agree on a list of core questions, that is, questions to be addressed—in the same words and by the same person—to each of the candidates interviewed. These questions should be based on the congregational self-study and pastoral position description and should be the same for all interviews.
- 7) Trick questions should not be included. They have no place in clergy interviews.
- 8) In framing the interview, focus on how the pastor functions rather than on the ideas and concepts he expresses. Remember that the manner in which a person has handled a situation in the past may well indicate how he might act in the future given the same or similar circumstances. Note especially expressions of energy, conviction, enthusiasm, respect for acceptable differences and the way personal faith is shared.

9) Try to avoid “yes/no” or other short answer questions. Examples of good questions include:

- a. Tell us about a time when...
- b. What do you want us to know about...
- c. Give us an example of...
- d. You say. . . about yourself. How has this been demonstrated?
- e. Describe an experience where...

Listen carefully in order to ascertain how the pastor draws naturally, winsomely, and confidently on the resources of his education, experience, and faith.

10) Some areas of concern and typical questions relating to them may be of benefit to you as you form your approach for your interview process (see attached Sample Interview Format). Your approach, of course, should be based upon your own congregational situation and upon the information about the candidates being interviewed.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

1) In carrying out its responsibilities, the interview committee will work closely with the district president or his representative.

2) The call committee will need to determine:

- a. Who from the committee will participate in the interview;
- b. The number of candidates to be interviewed (it may be appropriate for the voters' assembly to be involved in this decision);
- c. How the candidates to be interviewed will be selected;
- d. The type of interview to be used, e.g. telephone, letter, face-to-face, etc.;
- e. If face-to-face or telephone, the time and place of the interview, together with its anticipated length;
- f. If face-to-face, the arrangements for inviting the candidates (be very specific about arrangements for transportation, hospitality, lodging, expenses—with flexibility for the comfort and convenience of the pastor and his wife);
- g. If telephone, the arrangements for the date and time of the call, together with clear information about who will be (or is) listening in for the congregation;
- h. The person responsible for inviting the candidates, meeting them, arranging for lodging, seeing to it that expenses are promptly paid, etc. (it is better to have one person do this or one person for each candidate);
- i. The person responsible for sharing information on the process with each candidate.
- j. Those interviewed should be informed when a call is extended to another candidate.
- k. The report that will be given to the congregation (how it will be presented, in what format, and by whom). Ordinarily, the committee will recommend at least three choices to the congregation.

3) The committee does not act on its own behalf, but as the representative and servant of the entire congregation. Its agenda should be that of the congregation and not some private or individual agenda.

Reviewed April 2015
Reviewed April 2017



Date: April 1, 2019
To: Texas District Congregation and School Administrators
From: Linda Hagge, Texas District Treasurer
Re: "Salary Guidelines for Professional Church Workers"

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING "SALARY GUIDELINES:"

Two years ago the Texas District announced the transition from the Texas District provided "Salary Guidelines" to the new Concordia Plan's "Compensation Decision Support Tool" or CDST.

The transition that began in 2017 is now complete.

A professional compensation firm engaged by Concordia Plans researches actual salaries from many nationally recognized denominations (and independents) and maintains the data overtime in light of inflation and cost of living patterns by region. This expanded data base is thought to be truer to actual market rates and trends. In other words, the salary estimations provided by the CDST are specific to salary trends within each congregation's service area.

Please note the following:

- The pastor and parish professional tool launched in two separate phases over the last couple of years. Using this tool churches can create compensation estimates for positions including Sole Pastor, Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor, Director of Christian Education, Director of Christian Outreach, Deaconess, Director of Family Life Ministry, Director of Parish Music and Lay Minister. Here is the link for the pastor and parish professional tool:

<https://tc.cbiz.com/CompToolCPS/Login.aspx>

- The educator tool sits at a different URL than the pastor/parish Professional tool. The educator tool allows the user to create compensation estimates for positions including Teacher, Assistant Teacher, Head Principal/Administrator, Assistant Principal/Administrator and Early Childhood Director. Schools from preschools and child care centers all the way through high schools can use the tool. Here is the link for the educator tool:

<https://tc.cbiz.com/CompToolCPSEd/Login.aspx>

The CDST provides a range of data upon which a salary estimate may be made. This salary estimation is inserted at the top of the page 10 called "Worksheet for Development of a Worker's Total Compensation Package." Please read the Salary Guidelines to understand the philosophies and methodology surrounding a professionally managed compensation program for each congregation or school.

Additional information regarding the Texas District "Salary Guidelines:"

-The "Salary Guidelines" are intended to be a helpful resource for congregational leadership to use in establishing professional church worker compensation amounts. The guideline is not "perfect" for every position due to the unique needs of each congregation or school. Consequently, it is important to note: Congregation leaders and school administrators are responsible for setting salary levels appropriate for the work assigned. In light of this, please refrain from communicating to workers: "The District said you are to be paid \$x." Since each position within the congregation is unique, a position description should be provided to the worker. It is recommended that pay be tied to performance and to an up-to-date position description. The annual performance appraisal process should include a review of these elements.

-While the "Salary Guidelines" are not intended to mandate salary by specific type of position, we suggest that church professionals not be paid below the minimum pay shown by the CDST pay range. Prayerful and reasonable judgment should be used in applying the process. *We want to attract and retain talented workers for the mission field now and in the future.*

-Concordia Retirement Plans, as a part of the "Preserve the Core" program, announced in 2014 the discontinuance of the automatic 1% match for the first 2% of retirement dollars contributed by the employee to the 503b retirement plan. This change is effective June 30, 2014. Because the revised Concordia Retirement Plans will mean that workers will need to work longer (until their Social Security age) and save a little more (due to reduced retirement benefits), the District President is encouraging congregations to continue the matching program. Please see Concordia Plans for the details of this elective option. By so doing, it will encourage workers to save more for their retirement.

-Please direct any questions regarding the guidelines to Linda Hagge, 1-512-926-4272; 1-800-951-3478.



Salary Guidelines for Professional Church Workers

Revised April 2019

Message from the District President

Dear Fellow Servants of our Savior Jesus Christ,

Support for professional church workers is a joyful pursuit for God's people. It is a privilege to walk with God's servants for the purpose of His mission. Over the years the Texas District has offered guidance to congregations for setting the salary and benefits of professional church workers. Therefore, from time to time these guidelines will be adjusted and changed to meet the latest economic realities in Texas.

No salary guideline is perfect for every ministry situation, but these guidelines can help a congregation determine compensation for church workers. The salary guidelines are intended to be used by the committee or council that addresses the compensation of workers.

Guidelines are never prescriptive, but are suggestive of an approach for the review of the compensation you are providing your professional workers, so that:

- **God will be glorified;**
- **The ministries of your congregation will be honored, your congregation will feel that it is "doing right" by its professional workers, and the congregation can celebrate its demonstration of love and respect for those called to serve;**
- **Your church workers will experience a sense of appreciation and fulfillment in their ministry among you; and**
- **Young people will be encouraged to consider opportunities for full-time service in the church.**

It is a unique privilege for God's people to share in the important task of bringing the Good News of Jesus Christ to others. In His wisdom, God does call and lead some Christians to serve as full-time professional church workers. Truly these pastors, educators and other church workers are special gifts from God deserving of our love, support and care.

Your partner in mission,

Rev. Michael Newman, President

Texas District of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod

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SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLES

God has blessed the church with servants in ministry who are devoted to bringing the Good News of Jesus Christ to His people. When considering the compensation of a professional church worker, God's people are called to support and provide for those who "prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up..." (*Eph.4:11*)

The Bible describes the mutually supportive and respectful relationship of God's servants with His people:

- "They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you" (*Heb. 13:17*).
- "I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now" (*Philippians 1:3-5*).
- "We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves" (*1 Thessalonians 5:12-13*).

The Bible also provides wisdom and guidance for the support of those who serve in ministry:

- "Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel" (*1 Corinthians 9:13-14*).
- "The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, 'Do not muzzle the ox while he is treading out the grain' and 'The worker deserves his wages'" (*1 Tim. 5:17-18*).

In summary, the professional church worker is called by God to be servant, leader, counselor, caregiver, proclaimer, teacher, listener, evangelist, and steward to the congregation. The Christian congregation is called to respond to these benefits and blessings by providing a salary that is commensurate with education, responsibilities, and experience. This is accomplished by providing adequate salary, housing, transportation, vacation time, and financial assistance for spiritual and professional growth with genuine care, concern, and love for both worker and family.

Therefore, this guide is being submitted for serious consideration by congregations of the Texas District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, so that the office of the public ministry will be honored, God will be glorified, and parents will be encouraged “to give their children for the work of the Lord.”

PHILOSOPHICAL BASE

Based on the preceding scriptural principles, the following guidelines are intended to assist congregations in planning equitable and financially sound standards for compensation of their workers. Since the guidelines are just that, guidelines, and do not take into consideration all factors relevant to a worker’s value in a given ministry, the following factors are also to be taken into consideration:

- 1) **COMMITMENT** - dedication of self and time to the study of Scripture and the teaching/preaching/living thereof; vigilance in caring for people; openness and availability; seeing role as a calling and not as a job.
- 2) **EDUCATION** - continued growth through seminars, workshops, clinics, institutes, conferences, graduate-level courses, reading of relevant books, journals, publications, etc.
- 3) **EXPERIENCE** - time in the ministry, leading, conducting, or participating in workshops, seminars, etc., for your own parish or others; creative and/or innovative preaching, teaching, planning, organizing, administration, evangelism, assimilation, stewardship, worship, church growth, etc.
- 4) **RESPONSIBILITY** - good time management; conscientious in pastoral role and responsibilities; continuing growth in understanding of self and own capabilities; delegation of appropriate responsibilities; awareness and attention to one’s own spiritual needs, commitment to God, spouse, children, church, in that order; spiritual leadership; compassion; preparation for preaching, teaching, and meetings.
- 5) **PERFORMANCE** - doing the right job well; administrating/delegating appropriately; setting goals and objectives for oneself; working with congregational leadership to set goals and objectives; uses time effectively; seeks opportunities for ministry; educating, stimulating, and motivating as a role model; equipping the body of Christ for its ministry; utilizing gifts of people for the work of the church; seeking spiritual growth and development in the people as well as self.

Since performance evaluation is difficult, based upon the preceding factors, congregations and schools should develop position descriptions for their workers indicating areas of responsibility and expected performance levels. The job description should include what the

congregation or school will do to assist the worker in being the servant/leader they have called the worker to be, e.g., money/time for workshops, seminars, spiritual development activities, method and timing of evaluation.

While these guidelines and recommendations are not binding upon any congregation or school, the document presented is a guide for evaluating present levels of compensation. These guidelines do offer suggestions on equitable means of evaluating duties and the performance of those duties so that congregational leaders might be equipped to establish fair and reasonable levels of remuneration for their workers. We highly recommend that the salary figures calculated by use of this methodology be viewed as the "minimum" salary for which any related position is paid.

RECOMMENDATION TO CONGREGATIONS AND SCHOOLS

The establishment of a permanent Salary Committee is recommended for each congregation and school. Many congregations and schools have this responsibility assigned to a decision making committee as a part of their by-laws. This committee should be convened annually. The membership of the committee might include the Chairman of the Congregation (or his designee), Chairman of the Board of Elders, Chairman of the Board of Education and two members at large appointed by the Congregational Chairman. The Congregational Chairman should designate the Chairman of the Salary Committee. The purpose of this committee would be to annually re-evaluate all wages.

Please recognize that there may be a substantial difference between present scales and these recommendations. It may not be feasible to make up this difference or to do so at one time. The congregation/school should study the proposed salary schedule, establish compensation goals, set a timetable for achieving these goals and perhaps raise salaries some each year until desired levels are reached. For example, a three year goal on both the proposed income and expense side of the budget can be a blessing to both the ministry and care of workers God has placed in ministry.

All salary decisions must be made in light of a number of factors including current economic conditions. For example, a worker's pay adjustment must be made in light of cost of living increases for the community served. Additional considerations are addressed below.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Congregations and schools would be wise to make an annual performance evaluation of all workers. This will be helpful, not only to the employer, but to the workers. A worker's responsibilities are to be clearly identified in his or her position description, thus making it easier for the worker to properly perform his or her functions. Performance evaluation is to be conducted by the appropriate supervisory person to whom a worker reports. In the case of sole pastor or Administrative/Senior Pastor, the Chairman of the Congregation and Chairman of the Board of Elders should conduct the performance evaluation. Sample performance forms are included with this guide. It should be noted that the most effective format of

performance appraisals are those in which the performance measures are directly tied to the major areas of responsibility per the position description document.

Other professional church and school workers should be evaluated by the appropriate board(s) and supervisory personnel. Examples of worksheets used to complete a performance evaluation are shown in the Appendix.

POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Each congregation/school calls their workers to meet the needs of their particular congregation/school. Position descriptions should therefore, be reflective of actual assigned duties. Help with position descriptions is available from your MMF or Texas District School Ministry department (1-800-951-3478). Additional information can be found on the LCMS web site (www.lcms.org).

SALARY AND HOUSING ALLOWANCE DETERMINATION

SALARY

Since the nature of church and school work duties are varied by type of job and assignment, this guideline was not developed to establish a specific target or standard of compensation by type of leadership position or locale within Texas. It is a template to use as a guide. It will not and is not intended to cover every employment scenario within congregations. Each congregation's leadership team is responsible for setting compensation levels appropriate for the work assigned.

SALARY FOR PROFESSIONAL LCMS CHURCH WORKERS

The Compensation Decision support Tool was created to assist LCMS congregations in the process of determining salaries for certain staff positions. It may be accessed online here:

<https://tc.cbiz.com/CompToolCPS/Login.aspx>

The tool provides compensation suggestions for Sole Pastor, Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor, Director of Christian Education, Director of Christian Outreach, Deaconess, Director of family Life Ministry, Director of Parish Music and Lay Minister. If uncertain as how a role should be classified, please read the "Position Functions" document provided on line.

Before accessing the Decision Support Tool, it would be helpful to collect the following information:

- employee's position
- zip code of the congregation's location
- name of the church
- worker's years of work experience
- worker's education level
- additional adjustment percentage (see definition provided online)
- parsonage (if applicable)

The Compensation Decision Support Tool will provide a printable page outlining the factors entered to calculate "Total Salary Range." This range will be reflected as "lower pay," "average pay," and "higher pay." It is the responsibility of those tasked with setting salaries to make the final salary determination. Once an estimate of the worker's salary is determined, the salary figure is entered on the top line of the "Worksheet For Development of a Worker's Total Compensation Package." Benefit descriptions and determination guidance is provided later in this document.

SALARY FOR PROFESSIONAL LCMS SCHOOL WORKERS

The Compensation Decision support Tool was created to assist LCMS schools in the process of determining salaries for certain staff positions. It may be accessed online here:

<https://tc.cbiz.com/CompToolCPSEd/Login.aspx>

The tool provides compensation suggestions for elementary, middle and high school teacher, preschool teacher and assistant teacher, childcare teacher and assistant teacher, head administrator/principal, assistant administrator/principal and early childhood director. If uncertain as how a role should be classified, please read the "Position Functions" document provided on line.

Before accessing the Decision Support Tool, it would be helpful to collect the following information:

- employee's position
- zip code of the school's location
- name of the school
- worker's commissioned status
- years of work experience
- worker's education level
- additional adjustment percentage (see definition provided online)

The Compensation Decision Support Tool will provide a printable page outlining the factors entered to calculate "Total Salary Range." This range will be reflected as "lower pay," "average pay," and "higher pay." It is the responsibility of those tasked with setting salaries to make the final salary determination. Once an estimate of the worker's salary is determined, the salary figure is entered on the top line of the "Worksheet For Development of a Worker's Total Compensation Package." Benefit descriptions and determination guidance is provided later in this document.

WORKSHEET FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A WORKER'S TOTAL COMPENSATION PACKAGE

SALARY

Current Year

Proposed for

Total Cash Salary

(From Compensation Decision Support Tool;
Compensation Includes Housing, but not Benefits)

(1)

BENEFITS (Concordia Worker Benefit Plans)

Current Year

Proposed Year

Retirement Plan (2a)

Health Plan (2b)

Disability Plan (2c)

Sub-Total Concordia Plans (Add Lines 2a through 2c) (2)

Total Benefits (Add Lines 1 and 2)

(3)

PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES

Auto

Meeting Expenses

Continuing Education

Books and Periodicals

Hospitality

Civic Club Membership

Worker Education Debt

Phone/Internet Expense

(4)

(5)

(6)

(7)

(8)

(9)

(10)

(11)

Total Professional Expenses (Add Lines 4 through 11)

(12)

TOTAL COST OF PROFESSIONAL COMPENSATION

(Add Lines 3 and 12)

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING SALARY DETERMINATION

- Does the recommended salary increase reflect an additional year of service? Is the increase appropriate considering current economic factors such as inflation?
- Is the worker being rewarded for providing a high level of service?
- Is the worker receiving feedback that serves to enhance future performance and effectiveness (both immediate and long-term)? Never reduce salary or benefits as a form of performance feedback.
- A fillable Excel worksheet titled "Worksheet For Development Of A Worker's Total Compensation Package" is available on the District's website www.txdistlcms.org. See "Congregations," then "Treasurer Resources."
- Positions for which State certification is required should be filled with certified personnel.
- No worker should typically be paid less than any worker he or she supervises. If this situation should occur, explain the rationale or adjust accordingly.
- A worker living in church-owned housing should have deducted from their salary an amount equal to the fair market rental value of the housing plus any utilities paid by the congregation. "Parish owned" housing" is discussed below. Please also refer to the Treasurer's Manual for more information on this topic.
- **The suggested salary amount does not include any other benefits.** Examples of additional benefits include retirement and medical benefits, auto/phone allowance, office or other administrative expense allowances, etc. These additional cost considerations are discussed later in these materials.

HOUSING ALLOWANCE

Those individuals who are eligible for housing allowance (which is excluded from income tax) will need to fulfill the basic requirements set by the IRS. The congregation must designate a portion of the compensation calculated above as a "Housing Allowance," and a resolution designating the amount allowed should be entered in the congregation's minutes in December (or earlier) before the calendar year in which it is to be effective. The Appendix lists examples of resolutions for recording housing allowances within the congregation's minutes. The "housing allowance" election may be stated as a dollar amount or percentage of the "suggested salary" (bottom line) on the "Worksheet for Determining Compensation." This action may be amended at any time but must be applicable to future payments (not retroactive). Once the amount of the allowance has been properly designated, it is recommended that it be identified as such on the paycheck remittance as "housing allowance" however, this is not a requirement. It can be included in one check covering both the allowance and salary.

The amount of money designated as "housing allowance" is not considered income for federal income tax, but is considered income when computing Self-Employment tax. (See Social Security.)

It is the worker's responsibility to document the actual amount spent and the fair rental value of the dwelling and to adjust his income accordingly, if applicable.

For additional information on housing allowances, see the *Congregational Treasurer's Manual* and the *Taxes and Ministers* brochure, both published annually and available on the Synod's website: www.lcms.org.

See the Appendix for sample resolutions for establishing housing allowances. Also included is a guideline sheet for declaration of items included in a housing allowance.

PARISH OWNED HOUSING

The salary guidelines that follow have been developed upon the assumption a congregation does not provide the professional worker with a residence, but includes a "housing allowance" as part of cash salary. If the congregation provides a residence to the worker, the recommended salary must be discounted. If the utilities are provided in addition to the house, the recommended salary may be discounted by twenty percent (20%). Caution: If the congregation provides the professional church worker with a residence, the Congregation Treasurer must determine the value of that residence, not for IRS purposes, but for SE (Self- Employment Tax) purposes. This is usually done by a comparison to rental property in the area and using perhaps 80% of a comparable "going rate."

HOUSING FOR CALLED HUSBAND AND WIFE

Commissioned Ministers, both men and women, are eligible under the IRS code to exclude salary designated as "housing allowance" from taxable income. When both a husband and wife are Commissioned Ministers, both may exclude a housing allowance from income, but the same limitations apply. The Congregational Treasurer's Manual explains the limitations on housing allowance.

SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS

CONCORDIA WORKER BENEFIT PLANS

It is customary for congregations to enroll and support their workers in the Concordia Worker Benefit Plans. While these plans are a significant expense to the congregation, they do provide your worker the utmost of protection for health care and provide a retirement plan that is supplemental to what Social Security offers. The plans are "portable," that is, they are generally offered to workers of the Synod, and allow workers to accept a call to your congregation without benefit "voids" or penalty. There are three programs/benefits within the Concordia Worker Benefit Plans:

- 1) Concordia Health Plan
- 2) Concordia Retirement Plan
- 3) Concordia Disability & Survivor Plan

An optional program of All-cause Accident Insurance is also available. Details on these plans are available from the Concordia Plans, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO, 63122-7295; also at concordiaplans.org.

Under the provisions of the Concordia Worker Benefit Plans, the congregation is required to pay the entire premium for the (2) Retirement and (3) Disability & Survivor Plans. The provisions for

(1) Concordia Health Plan are different and require only that the congregation pay the premium for the worker. However, most congregations have provided Concordia Health Plan coverage to a worker's spouse and dependents. If the congregation does not pay for the worker's spouse and dependents, the worker is making this payment from his taxable income. On the other hand, if the congregation provides this health care coverage insurance as a supplemental benefit, the amount is free of income tax for the worker.

CONCORDIA RETIREMENT PLAN REGULAR/FULL RATE DIFFERENCE TO BE PAID TO WORKERS(*)

All ministers of religion enrolled in the Concordia Retirement Plan as a "new worker" on January 1, 1982 or after participate on the **Regular Basis**. Workers who enrolled in the CRP prior to that date, and whose CRP membership did not subsequently terminate, have the option to participate on either the **Regular or Full Basis**.

If an employer is contributing to the Concordia Retirement Plan on the **Regular Basis** for a minister of religion, that employer is to make the amount of the difference between the **Full Basis** rate and the **Regular Basis** rate available to that minister of religion. This "equalization payment" (formerly referred to as off-set payment) assures that all workers deemed "self-employed" by Social Security are treated equitably. This special payment must be reported as income for Federal income tax purposes. There is one exception to this special payment. If the employer is already helping a worker pay part of the self-employed

S.S. tax (e.g., Social Security allowance of 7.65%), this special payment is not required to be paid.

(*) This benefit discontinued effective June 30, 2014.

TAX SHELTERED RETIREMENT PLAN

Church workers may shelter a portion of their wages in a 403(b) tax sheltered retirement savings plan administered through Concordia Plans. This Concordia Retirement Savings Plan (CRSP) is managed for Concordia Plans by Metropolitan Life. See the ConcordiaPlans.org web site or *LCMS Congregational Treasurers Manual* for more information.

PENSION AND RETIREMENT

Each congregation which participates in the Concordia Retirement Plan MUST provide the Concordia Retirement Plan for all eligible workers. This national plan, which is qualified with the Internal Revenue Service, prohibits discrimination against any eligible employee by denying this benefit. The congregation pays the full cost of the plan.

SICK LEAVE. HOSPITALIZATION AND DISABILITY

Sick leave, hospitalization, and disability shall be granted in accordance with Worker Benefit Plans and/or other benefit programs in which each congregation is encouraged to participate. The Concordia plan, entitled Concordia Disability and Survivor Plan (CDSP) helps to ensure that an eligible worker's compensation is not disrupted.

SOCIAL SECURITY

The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod has taken positions in its conventions indicating that it does not oppose social security on the basis of religious principles. In fact, conventions of the Synod have enacted resolutions encouraging participation in social security, implying that, as a church body which ordains ministers, it does not recognize a theological basis for opposing participation in social security. Professional Church Workers are, therefore, encouraged to participate in the program.

Please note that for social security tax purposes, clergy are considered "self-employed" and therefore pay this tax on both "salary" and "housing." The current tax rate is 15.3% (12.4 component for old-age, survivors, and disability insurance (OASDI) and a 2.9% component for Medicare). Consult your tax advisor or IRS.gov for current information regarding tax rates and deductions.

PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES

AUTO ALLOWANCE

Car and travel expenses should be regarded as “business expenses” of the congregation. Reimbursement should cover actual miles traveled. (Most agencies and businesses allow the standard IRS rate which includes gas and oil, depreciation, maintenance, and insurance.) A year-end review of actual expenses should be conducted to assure that total travel expenses are covered. Congregations may also wish to purchase or lease a car for their workers.

There are tax ramifications for both unaccountable cash allowances and personal use of congregation-owned vehicles. Please refer to the *Congregation Treasurer’s Manual* for additional information.

MEETING EXPENSE

Attendance by professional church workers at Synod and Texas District approved conventions, retreats, conferences and workshops should be encouraged and considered to be part of the business of the congregation. Indeed, the attendance of all professional church workers at official Texas District Conventions is required by the Handbook of the Synod. The worker should not be required to utilize vacation time or personal funds to attend these events.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH (CONTINUING EDUCATION)

To maintain professional skills, funding should be available to cover a minimum of one course per staff member per year. It is suggested that an amount between \$200-\$500 per-year per- worker be budgeted for this purpose. This sum is not added to a worker's compensation but held in a reserve account until needed. A worker is encouraged to submit an annual plan for approval. The worker should not be expected to use vacation time to attend continuing education events.

BOOKS, PERIODICALS

The congregation is encouraged to include an established amount in the annual budget to assist the worker in the purchase of professional journals, books and memberships in professional organizations. Funds provided for professional books, periodicals and memberships should not be considered to be part of a worker's salary.

HOSPITALITY

A professional church worker may find it convenient to conduct church business by meeting for coffee, breakfast or lunch. It may be important to meet with a prospective congregation member or board member in a hospitable setting. The cost of hospitality on the part of the worker is not something the church worker should pay personally. The congregation should consider providing a fund in the budget from which your church worker might be reimbursed for hospitality extended on behalf of the congregation. A policy should be established for use and accountability of these funds.

CIVIC CLUB MEMBERSHIPS

Many pastors belong to civic clubs (Rotary, Lions, Optimists, etc.) as a part of community exposure and awareness for the congregation. Congregations should consider assisting in payment of annual dues as part of the congregation's operating budget.

WORKER EDUCATION DEBT

Many church professionals are graduating from the seminaries and colleges with significant educational debt. They have undertaken this debt to be equipped to serve the congregation. A congregation should give serious consideration to assisting workers in repayment of this debt. Such assistance is regular income for the worker and subject to IRS taxation.

PHONE/INTERNET EXPENSE

The congregation is encouraged to include an amount in the compensation package to assist the worker in the cost of phone or internet access. Please see IRS tax policies regarding "accountability" and "non-accountability" plans for phone/internet expense to employees.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS RELATED TO COMPENSATION

VACATION AND DAYS OFF

Each congregation should adopt a vacation schedule for its workers. This schedule should be recorded within the official personnel manual of the congregation. The vacation schedule should be reviewed annually and the necessary allowances made if the ministry load has been exceptionally heavy for any period of time. Full-time church workers should receive vacation during their first year in ministry and should be encouraged to take some vacation each year. Each worker should be required to take at least a two-week vacation per year. The following schedule of allowable vacation time is recommended for workers in 12-month positions:

Days of Vacation (Includes Saturdays & Sundays)

Total Years of Service	Commissioned Ministers	Ordained Ministers
0 - 5 yrs	14 days * (2 wks)	21 days (3 wks)
5 - 15 yrs	21 days * (3 wks)	28 days (4 wks)
15 + yrs	28 days * (4 wks)	35 days (5 wks)

*In addition to these days, Commissioned Ministers may be allowed the Christmas Recess and Spring Break as "down time," not to be counted as vacation time.

The anniversary date of a worker's ordination or commissioning is normally used in calculating service for purposes of vacation time. The congregation might find it necessary to prorate vacation time if the worker has not served for a full year.

Educators serving on a ten (10) month contract are not normally granted vacation time in addition to the time-off at Christmas and Spring Break. Teachers with 10-month positions are typically expected to be at work each day class is in session. Their vacation is given in accordance with the school's academic calendar. Teachers with 12-month positions are typically given vacation according to the scale above and are expected to be at work during the school's academic vacations unless they are using their assigned vacation days. More information on teacher vacations can be found in the sample Board Manual from the LCMS District and Congregational Services website (www.lcms.org).

Some congregations have allowed their pastor an "off-Sunday" on the fifth Sunday of the month as a week-end away. This practice is to be encouraged as "compensatory" time for the extra duties that are part of holiday seasons.

Days-off to attend required Texas District professional church worker conferences and meetings, and attendance at professional seminars and workshops are not vacation time, and congregations are discouraged from considering these professional growth meetings as part of the worker's vacation time.

Congregations calling second career workers may wish to adjust this scale to reflect the workers' vacation at his or her previous employment.

Vacations are granted for refreshment and renewal so that a worker may continue to serve with strength and vigor. A shortened vacation may not be in the best interest of the congregation.

The congregation should honor the worker's day off each week. Attendance at conferences or district meetings is not to be part of day off activities. The day off is given, not only for the health of the worker, but also for the sake of the worker's family. A day off does not include attending church meetings on the night of the off day. Though the worker must have a day off, the worker should always be available for emergencies. If the worker should leave town, someone in the congregation should know where and how to reach him/her. The definition of an "emergency" should be defined by policy so that the vacationing church worker is not needlessly contacted.

SABBATICALS

The Commission on Ministerial Health of the Texas District, LCMS, encourages congregations and schools to develop a policy for sabbaticals and then encouraging its workers to take advantage of this opportunity to be renewed, restored, and reenergized in body, soul and mind. The LCMS in convention in 2001 passed a resolution encouraging congregations to fund sabbaticals for its pastors. Guidelines for developing a sabbatical policy were approved by the Board of Directors of the Texas District, LCMS in March 2004. These documents are available on the Texas District web site at: Resources -> Documents and Forms -> Sabbatical Guidelines (Word).

PASTOR'S FUND

In the course of his ministry, a pastor will be asked to provide minor financial assistance to persons in need. The financial assistance provides, as a representative of the congregation, should not be from his personal funds. Many congregations provide their pastor with discretionary funds for such purposes. The pastor should maintain complete records and report regularly on their use.

GIFTS, PERQUISITES, CHRISTMAS GIFTS OR BONUSES

Congregations are encouraged to remember their workers at Christmas time and five year intervals of service. When parishioners insist on giving gifts or perquisites, it shall be left to the discretion of the workers to use these as the individual so desires. Gifts to church workers for which the donor receives a receipt for tax deduction purposes must be reported as taxable income by the church worker. Please see the Treasurer's Manual for details.

PERSONAL, SICK OR SPECIAL LEAVE

Personal business must occasionally be transacted during regular business hours. In order to facilitate such transactions, congregations have found it advisable to allow time for professional workers to conduct such business.

It is suggested that sick leave be granted in accordance with the Concordia Disability and Survivor Plan of fourteen (14) days per year. After fourteen days of illness, the Concordia Disability Plan provides wage replacement. It is suggested that a worker be allowed one day per month as sick leave with a maximum accumulation of fourteen (14) days.

A congregation may grant special leave at the discretion of the board of directors to cover special cases of emergency or death in the immediate family of the professional worker. Special leave should not be considered vacation, sick leave or personal leave.

PREGNANCY LEAVE

Each congregation is encouraged to adopt a policy that allows a pregnant worker to use accumulated vacation and sick leave in conjunction with benefits offered by Concordia Disability and Survivor Plan. A policy of six to eight weeks is not an unreasonable time to hold a position for a new mother.

MILITARY DUTY

Professional church workers who are members of the armed forces will need time-off to meet their reserve obligations. It is customary for reserve military personnel to be involved in weekend duty once a month and to be on active duty two weeks usually during the summer. It is suggested that since the church worker is paid by the military for active duty, one week of the two weeks of summer active duty be considered vacation time (salaried) and the other as special leave (non-salaried). If a substitute is required to handle regular responsibilities of your worker, it is expected that your worker will compensate that substitute in accord with the congregation's guidelines. It is also assumed that a pastor/chaplain will make arrangements and compensate a substitute pastor to handle emergencies. Congregations served by pastors called to active duty are considered vacated if the call-up is for an extended period.

MOVING EXPENSES

When a congregation calls a professional church worker, the general accepted practice is to pay all necessary and reasonable moving expenses for the worker and his family. Some or all of these expenses, however, may be taxable to the employee. See the *Congregational Treasurer's Manual* for additional information.

FACILITIES. EQUIPMENT. OFFICE HELP

The congregation has the responsibility of providing proper facilities, such as office equipment and supplies, office help, etc., that may be necessary to conduct the administrative functions of the church and school.

GUEST PREACHER/LECTURER COMPENSATION

At times, the pastor may be temporarily absent due to illness, vacation, or the congregation is in the "call process." A guest preacher or lecturer may be invited to provide worship or bible study services. If the guest pastor is to be present for worship in the morning and must travel 100 miles or more, the congregation is to provide motel/hotel lodging and meals for him. All mileage is to be reimbursed at the current IRS rate. A compensation guide is on the Texas District web site under "Treasurer Resources." Minimum compensation amounts vary by type of pastoral service provided.

SALARIES FOR NON-CALLED STAFF

This compensation guide is intended to help set salaries for Called workers and other teachers of congregations in the Texas District. Job descriptions, experience levels, and educational requirements vary greatly among the other staff in a congregation, including the secretaries, business and facility managers, and other ministry positions. Although it would be difficult to establish such a scale, the following suggestions may help a congregation in setting these salaries.

Consider surveying your local school district for salaries of school secretaries, custodians, etc. Also check with local businesses and other churches in your area regarding pay scales. For positions that utilize an advanced degree, use the scale in this guide based on the education and experience of the applicant. For part time staff, consider using this guide to calculate a full time salary and divide the salary by 2080 hours to approximate an hourly rate.

The American Guild of Organists provides salary guidelines for its membership. Those guidelines may be downloaded at <http://www.agohq.org/profession/indexsalary.html>.

APPENDIX

ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO FRINGE BENEFITS

The traditional approach to providing the church worker with benefits is for the congregation to pre-select the benefits and inform the worker. The congregation is billed directly by the Concordia Worker Benefit Plans for retirement, health insurance and disability/survivor insurance coverage for its worker. Under this approach the benefits are provided without recognition as taxable income for the worker.

Congregations with multiple workers have found that there is a disparity between the total cost to the congregation for the benefits package, especially in health care insurance, between its single and married workers. Further, the spouses of some married workers may be provided the health care coverage by their employer. In such instances the spouse has "double coverage".

The "alternative approach" to offering benefits may allow some choices to be made by the worker. As long as the congregation is fair in the administration of their benefits plan, this may be a viable option. Please defer to the congregation's policy and Concordia Plan administration documents on fair benefits administration.

The "alternative approach" involves two basic steps:

(1) The congregation establishes an amount that it will spend in providing "benefits" to each of its workers. The amount might be a fixed sum or a percentage of the worker's cash salary.

(2) The worker and the congregation agree on how the amount set aside for the worker is to be spent.

For example, Grace Lutheran Church's pastor's cash salary has been set at \$65,000. In addition, Grace Congregation has established as the "Benefits Allowance" for their pastor 30% of cash salary.

Pastor's Cash Salary	\$65,000
Benefit Allowance	<u>19,500</u>
Total Congregation Cost	\$84,500

The list below outlines how the pastor and Grace congregation planned to use the "Benefit Allowance"

Concordia Retirement Program (8.7%)	\$5,070
Disability/Survivor Program (2.25%)	1,463
Health Insurance (Option D)	8,280
Retirement Plan contribution	<u>4,687</u>
Total Benefit Allowance	\$19,500

Grace Congregation requires that its pastor be enrolled in Concordia retirement, disability/survivor and health insurance programs as per their fair benefits administration

policy. The decision regarding the health insurance option level (beyond Option A) (worker only) is made by the worker. The decision to have a retirement contribution rather than take cash to help pay self-employment tax was made by the pastor.

Another example: Grace Congregation has a Christian Day School. One of the called teachers is single in the first year of teaching with a cash salary of \$42,473. Faith congregation has established the benefit allowance for its teachers at 30% of cash salary.

Teacher's Cash Salary	\$42,473
Benefit Allowance	<u>12,742</u>
Total Congregation Cost	\$55,215

The plan developed by the teacher and Grace congregation for the use of the "Benefit Allowance:"

Concordia Retirement Program (8.7%)	\$3,695
Disability/Survivor Program (1.2%)	510
Health Insurance (Option C)	7,800
Cash	<u>737</u>
Total Allowance	\$12,742

This teacher decided to have the congregation include \$737 as additional income. Income tax will have to be paid by the teacher on this additional income, but this young teacher is in need of the cash to pay self-employment tax and to repay government loans obtained while in college.

APPENDIX
SAMPLE RESOLUTION FOR ESTABLISHING HOUSING ALLOWANCE

SAMPLE 1
RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that (name of congregation), as a Standing Resolution to remain in force and effect until such time as amended or revoked, hereby authorizes and establishes a housing allowance for each Minister of the Gospel at any time serving it in the amount of \$_____ per year.

SAMPLE 2
RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that (name of congregation), as a Standing Resolution to remain in force and effect until such time as amended or revoked, hereby authorizes and establishes a housing allowance for each Minister of the Gospel at any time serving it in the amount of each year equal to _____% of that person's gross annual compensation.

SAMPLE 3
RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that (name of congregation), as a Standing Resolution to remain in force and effect until such time as amended or revoked, hereby authorizes and establishes a housing allowance for (individual's name) at any time serving it in the amount of \$_____per year.

SAMPLE 4
RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, that (name of congregation), as a Standing Resolution to remain in force and effect until such time as amended or revoked, hereby authorizes and establishes a housing allowance for (individual's name) at any time serving it in the amount each year equal to _____% of that person's annual compensation.

SAMPLE 5
RESOLUTION
(MUST BE PASSED EVERY YEAR)

"Be it resolved that the dollar amounts noted adjacent to the names of those individuals listed below, be stipulated as housing allowance for the year _____in accordance with the regulations of the Internal Revenue Service. In the event of an audit, each of the listed individuals understands that the "Burden of Proof" is upon them to substantiate the amount. The housing allowance will be paid from _____(date)_____to December 31, _____. (List workers below with the amount of their housing allowance next to each name.)

APPENDIX

Minister's Estimate of Expenses for Housing Allowance

ITEM	AMOUNT
1. Rent on home	_____
2. Garage Rental	_____
3. Down payment, legal, loan and title fees on purchase of home	_____
4. Mortgage payments (principal and interest)	_____
5. Real estate taxes on home	_____
6. Property Insurance (homeowner's and renter's)	_____
7. Utilities: Gas	_____
Electricity	_____
Water	_____
Heat	_____
Telephone (basic service)	_____
Trash Pick-up	_____
Storm Drainage	_____
8. Furnishing and appliances (purchase/repair)	_____
9. Structural repairs and remodeling	_____
10. Lawn care and landscaping	_____
11. Maintenance items (household cleaners, light bulbs, pest control)	_____
12. Other allowable expenses (specify)	_____
13. Home Owner's Association Dues	_____
TOTAL	\$_____

APPENDIX

Performance Review For Pastor and Principal

During the past year worker has given evidence of:	No Evidence	Minimally Adequate Evidence	Reasonable & Expected Evidence	Unusual & Exceptional Evidence	Rare & Superior Evidence
Commitment and support of the mission of the church and its school					
Understanding of basic Lutheran theology and integrating the faith into total ministry					
Performance as a skilled preacher/teacher in the pulpit and/or classroom					
Performance as a skilled helper and counselor					
Good, healthy relationships with parishioners, students, parents					
Supports and shows loyalty to church/school staff as a team member					
Personal commitment to excel as minister/leader					
Initiating, creating, and giving vision as a Christian leader					
Equipping staff and members for service					
Walking with Christ; model for others to follow					
Administrative and leadership skills					
Loyalty to and supportive of subordinates					
Achievement of annual goals					
Continued personal growth					

APPENDIX

Performance Review For Teacher and DCE

During the past year worker has given evidence of:	No Evidence	Minimally Adequate Evidence	Reasonable & Expected Evidence	Unusual & Exceptional Evidence	Rare & Superior Evidence
Commitment and support of the mission of the church and its school					
Understanding of basic Lutheran theology and integrating the faith into total ministry					
Performance as a skilled teacher					
Performance as a skilled counselor and helper of people					
Personal relationships with parishioners, parents, young people					
Loyalty to church/school staff as a team member					
Personal commitment to excel as an educator and minister					
Initiating, creating, and giving vision as a Christian leader					
Equipping members for service					
Walking with Christ; model for others to follow					
Loyalty to, support of effective supervision					
Performing clerical and record keeping tasks accurately and timely					
Achievement of annual goals					
Continued personal growth					



Compensation Decision Support Tool

LCMS Churches



User ID

Password

Log In

The following login credentials will give you access to this site:

User ID: CPS

Password: CPS

You will be logged out automatically after 20 minutes of inactivity.

If you have any questions, send an email to info@concordiaplans.org

Tool Updates

The Compensation Decision Support Tool for LCMS pastors and parish professionals is now available in the Apple app store! Search "CPS Comp" to find it.

You can now enter an experience factor for parish professional position calculations, and we have updated our pastoral salary data to provide you the most current information possible.

APPENDIX H-1

SAMPLE OF CALL WORSHIP SERVICE

Lutheran Service Book Hymn 913 - "O Holy Spirit, Enter In" vs. 1, 2, 3

First Reading

Romans 10:14-15, 17

How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

Numbers 27:15-17

Moses said to the Lord, "Let the Lord, the God of the Spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation, who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring them in; that the congregation of the Lord may not be as sheep which have no shepherd."

Message from the Pastor

Prayer

Silence for Meditation

First Vote

LSB Hymn 869 - "With the Lord Begin Thy Task" vs. 1, 2, 5

Results of Count

*(If, during any count, additional hymns are needed to fill the time,
select one from the list at the end of the next page.)*

Second Reading

Martin Luther 1530

There is no dearer treasure, nor any more precious thing on earth or in this life than a real and faithful pastor or preacher. He does great and mighty works. He seeks to inform and instruct those people in his care; comfort and advise those who are troubled, help to maintain peace and to settle differences, teach obedience, morals, discipline and honor. By his work and by his word the Kingdom of God is maintained in the world; so, too, are kept the name and the honor and the glory of God, the true knowledge of God, the right faith and understanding of Christ, the fruits of the suffering, blood and death of Christ, the gifts and works and power of the Holy Spirit, the true and saving use of Baptism and the Sacrament, and the right and pure doctrine of the Gospel.

Prayer

Silence for Meditation

Second Vote

LSB Hymn 710 - "The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want"

LSB Hymn 732 - "All Depends on Our Possessing" vs. 1, 2, 5

Results of Count

Third Reading

Around 1530, Martin Luther expounded the qualities of a good preacher and contrasted those qualities with those of a preacher as the world would have him. First, as the world would have him, six things are necessary to the preacher: (1) He must have a fine accent. (2) He must be learned. (3) He must be eloquent. (4) He must be a handsome person. (5) He must take no money, but have money to give. (6) He must tell people what they like to hear.

And now, the true qualities of the good preacher are: (1) He should be able to teach in a right and orderly way. (2) He should have a good head. (3) He should be able to speak well. (4) He should have a good voice. (5) He should have a good memory. (6) He should know when to stop. (7) He should be sure of his material and be diligent. (8) He should stake body and life, goods and honor in his ministry. (9) He must suffer himself to be vexed and flayed by everybody.

Prayer

Silence for Meditation

Third Vote

LSB Hymn 750 - "If Thou But Trust God to Guide Thee" vs. 1, 7

LSB Hymn 698 - "May We Thy Precepts, Lord, Fulfill"

Results of Count

Fourth Reading

The Doctrine of the Ministry 1952

It is not a man's gifts, his learning, his efficiency, or the charm of his personality which make him a minister, but the Gospel which he is called upon and ordained to preach. This makes him minister, servant, bishop, overseer, pastor, shepherd, priest, a Christ to his neighbor, parson, representative person. This, which he is, he must constantly become. He must, therefore, stand before his people as one of them, a fellow-sinner, and yet in the full dignity and authority of his office, which he "strives to adorn with a holy life and conversation." The high esteem which the laity puts upon the office of the ministry is not to be disappointed. The minister is not a priest with an indelible character upon whose ministrations in the sacraments the Layman is dependent. Neither is he just another member of the congregation. But he stands before the congregation as the bearer of the office of Word and Sacraments upon which the congregation is dependent.

Silence for Meditation –

Fourth Vote

LSB Hymn 707 - "Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways"

LSB Hymn 498 - "Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest" vs. 1, 2, 7

Results of Count

Closing LSB Hymn 921 - "On What Has Now Been Sown" vs. 1, 2

Extra Hymns:

LSB 765 - "God Moves in a Mysterious Way"

LSB 655 - "Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word"

LSB 728 - "How Firm a Foundation, O Saints of the Lord"



Diploma of Vocation

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND OF THE + SON AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

To _____
of _____

Having called on the Lord, our God, for guidance and in the exercise of the authority with which He has vested His church on earth, we, the members of

_____ of _____

have elected you to the office of _____
and herewith extend to you this formal notification of your solemn call.

In the name of the Triune God and by His authority we ask you to assume the responsibilities of the office to which we have called you and faithfully to perform all the duties of your office according to the Word of God and the confessional standards of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as drawn from the Sacred Scriptures and found in the Book of Concord. We ask you to do this according to the needs as specified in the accompanying document or as may be resolved and mutually agreed upon from time to time. To the end that you may be enabled to do this, we pledge you our wholehearted and continuing cooperation and support in word and deed and in our prayers to God in your behalf.

We pray God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has moved us to extend our call to you, to convince you by His Holy Spirit that it comes from Him; to induce you to accept it; to conduct you safely to your field of labor; and to bless your ministrations to the glory of His holy name, the building of His church, the temporal and eternal welfare of many people, and your own great joy and blessing.

Signature - Congregational Representative

Signature - Pastor

(Signatures to be affixed during the public ceremony of installation)

Supplement to the Diploma of Vocation

In the name of the Triune God and by His authority, in order that we might carry out His mission to the world, we hereby authorize and obligate you:

To administer to us the Word of God in its full truth and purity as contained in the Sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and as set forth in the confessional writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as found in the Book of Concord;

To administer the holy sacraments in accordance with their divine institution;

To demonstrate the mind and spirit of Christ as you serve the members of the congregation and equip them for Christ's mission to seek and save the lost;

To equip and enable the members of the congregation to serve one another and those outside the fellowship of the congregation;

To perform the functions of a pastor in an evangelical manner; to aid, counsel, and guide members of all ages and social conditions; to visit the sick and the dying; to admonish the indifferent and the erring; to support the members of the congregation as they extend that evangelical ministry to others;

To guard and promote faithfully the spiritual welfare of the members of this congregation, in particular to see to the instruction of the catechumens, both children and adults, in the Word and thus prepare them for communicant membership in the church;

To guide the congregation in applying the divinely ordained discipline of the church according to the Word of God and to assist and lead the members of the congregation in practicing the forgiven life with one another;

To promote and guide the mission activity of the congregation as it is related to the local community and to endeavors of the Synod and its Districts, in particular to train workers and guide them in evangelism and to enlist the support of the congregation for mission work;

To serve as a resource and guide for members of the congregation as they participate in the ministry of Christian education, and to train parents to teach the Christian faith to their children;

To assist the congregation in adopting administrative policies and procedures that will help it carry out the mission of a Christian congregation;

To serve the congregation as an example of Christian conduct; to endeavor earnestly to live in Christian unity with the members of the congregation, fellow workers, and sister congregations in the Synod; and by the grace of God to do everything possible for the edification of the congregation and the upbuilding of the church in Christ.

As the baptized people of God we partner with you to accomplish His mission to the world, and we hereby obligate ourselves:

To receive you as a servant of Jesus Christ, to give you the honor and love and obedience that the Word prescribes, to aid you by word and deed, and to support you with our diligent, faithful assistance and prayers;

To make faithful and regular use of the means of grace;

To work with you to equip God's people to glorify Him and extend His kingdom by living out our baptism;

To make appropriate arrangements for your continuing education as a professional person in the ministry of the Gospel;

To provide for your proper maintenance according to our ability and to review your salary, housing arrangements, and all allowances periodically, beginning with the following arrangements.

Compensation Information

(Please note: The congregation is encouraged to consult your District's Salary Compensation Guidelines prior to completing the following sections.)

Salary Information

Basic cash salary for 12 months (do not include any other payments to the pastor which are designated below): \$ _____

Salary paid:

If other, please describe: _____

Housing Information

Does the congregation own a parsonage?

(If a parsonage is provided, complete the following section. If a housing allowance is provided, proceed to the Housing Allowance Information section below.)

Parsonage/Utilities Information

(Please note: It is recommended that the congregation pay all costs associated with providing a parsonage and basic utilities such as heat, electricity, water, sewer, and telephone.)

Description of parsonage: _____

Average annual parsonage utility cost: \$ _____

Utilities paid in full by congregation?

Additional Information: _____

Housing equity provided by the congregation? Annual amount: \$ _____

(Please note: Any additional amount which the congregation gives to the pastor as "housing equity" is taxable income.)

Pastor has the option to receive a housing allowance to purchase or rent his own home instead of living in the congregation-owned parsonage?

Housing Allowance Information

(Please note: Pastors are eligible to apply for a Lutheran Church Extension Fund [LCEF] housing loan.)

Annual amount or percentage of housing allowance (including utility allowance) paid to the pastor: _____

(Do not include the amount entered here in the "Basic Cash Salary" listed above)

Is a down payment loan available to the pastor from the congregation?

If yes, maximum amount of a down payment loan that is available to the pastor: \$ _____

Rate of interest for the down payment loan to the pastor: _____ %

What are the provisions for repaying the down payment loan?

Additional Housing Information

Auto Information

Are both a car and operating expenses provided by the congregation?

Mileage reimbursement paid to the pastor (instead of a car allowance)?

If yes, rate of mileage reimbursement per mile: _____ IRS rate or \$ _____

Maximum amount of mileage reimbursement per year: \$ _____

Annual car allowance paid to the pastor?

If yes, annual amount of car allowance paid to the pastor: \$ _____

Annual amount for car replacement paid to the pastor?

If yes, annual amount paid to the pastor for car replacement: \$ _____

Benefits Information

Does the congregation provide a benefit package for the pastor through Concordia Plans?

If yes, which Plan package is provided? **

Note _____

The Church's Plan

Concordia Health Plan (CHP)
Concordia Retirement Plan (CRP)
Concordia Disability & Survivor Plan (CDSP)
Concordia Retirement Savings Plan (CRSP)*

Package 2

Concordia Health Plan
Concordia Retirement Plan
Concordia Disability & Survivor Plan

Package 3

Concordia Retirement Plan
Concordia Disability & Survivor Plan

*The Concordia Retirement Savings Plan may be added to Packages 2 or 3.

Date the congregation will begin providing benefit coverage: _____

Note: For newly placed graduates early enrollment may be available through Concordia Plans. Please review the Plan requirements.

If the congregation provides one of the packages that includes the Concordia Health Plan (CHP), which coverage level option, or options, (if you offer worker choice) are currently provided? **

"Copay" plans reflect a traditional PPO plan, and "HSA" plans are qualified high deductible plans that can be paired with a Health Savings Account. Dental & vision benefits are unbundled in all plans except closed grandfathered plans. For plan details, please contact Concordia Plans.

Healthy Me Copay A
Healthy Me Copay B
Healthy Me Copay C
Healthy Me Copay D
Healthy Me Copay E
Whole Health (Copay)***
Select HMO-C***

Healthy Me HSA A
Healthy Me HSA B
Healthy Me HSA C
Healthy Me HSA D
Healthy Me HSA E
Whole Health1000 (Copay)***
Select HMO-C 2000***

Whole Health2000 (HSA)***

** If your ministry was vacant prior to the beginning of the calendar year, contact your Account Rep. at Concordia Plans at 888-927-7526 before completing this document.

*** Some options are available in select geographic areas only. Before selecting one of these, contact Concordia Plans at 888-927-7526.

With the above plan options, how will the congregation be providing dental benefits?

- ☐ Non-Contributory – Workers do not share in the cost
☐ Contributory – Workers do share in the cost
☐ Voluntary – Congregation does not share any of the cost

With the above plan options, how will the congregation be providing vision benefits?

- ☐ Non-Contributory – Workers do not share in the cost
☐ Contributory – Workers do share in the cost
☐ Voluntary – Congregation does not share any of the cost

The following grandfathered plans can only be offered if the congregation is already offering the plan to existing workers. Dental and vision benefits are bundled and included with these plans.

Option A Option B Option C Option D Option E Option HDHP

If the congregation provides the CHP, for whom does the congregation pay premiums?

(Please note: It is recommended that the congregation pay for health care for the entire family. Concordia Plans requires that the employer pay at least 50% of the contributions for enrolled workers. In order to comply with non-discrimination laws, cost sharing must be on a non-discriminatory basis for all enrolled workers.)

Does the pastor share in any of the cost of the Concordia Health Plan?

If yes, the amount or percentage of the Concordia Health Plan to be paid for by the pastor: \$ _____ or _____ %

If the congregation does not provide the Concordia Health Plan, is another health care plan provided?

Healthcare provider and additional information

If the congregation provides another health plan, for whom does the congregation pay premiums?

Does the pastor share in any of the cost of this health care plan?

If yes, the amount or percentage of the health care plan to be paid for by the pastor: \$ _____ or _____ %

Benefits Information (continued)

Does the congregation participate in a Flexible Spending Account (FSA)?

Additional Information: _____

Does the congregation participate in a Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA)?

Additional Information: _____

Does the congregation provide a Health Savings Account (HSA) if it offers an HSA compatible plan?

Additional Information: _____

Does the congregation pay for/help offset any of the annual individual/family deductibles?

Additional information: _____

Does the congregation participate in a Cafeteria Plan?

Additional Information: _____

If the congregation does not provide The Church's Plan package, does it provide the CRSP with another package?

If the congregation provides The Church's Plan package (*or has added the CRSP to another plan package*), does the congregation provide an employer match?

If yes, what amount is matched by the congregation:

If the congregation does not provide a match to the CRSP, does it provide a flat contribution?

If yes, what is the amount of the flat contribution? \$ _____

Additional information _____

If the congregation doesn't provide a package that includes the Concordia Retirement Savings Plan (CRSP), does it provide another plan or additional retirement benefits in the form of another 403(b), etc.?

Additional Information: _____

Is additional income paid to the pastor to enable him to pay a portion of his self-employment tax?

Additional Information: _____

Additional information regarding the benefits package offered by the congregation:

Moving Information

Personal travel expenses paid when moving to the new location?

Is there a maximum amount of personal travel expenses paid by the congregation?

If yes, maximum amount: \$ _____

Personal moving expenses paid when moving to the new location?

Is there a maximum amount of moving expenses paid by the congregation?

If yes, maximum amount: \$ _____

Moving arrangements (professional moving company, U Haul, etc.):

Is there an additional amount given to the pastor as a Relocation Grant to cover misc. moving expenses?

If yes, amount of relocation grant: \$ _____

Additional information regarding moving:

Miscellaneous Information

If calling a seminary graduate, will the congregation support his involvement in a post-seminary support program (e.g., PALS program, District mentoring program, etc.)?

Is the congregation willing/able to assist the pastor in the reduction of his educational debt?

If yes, please describe: _____

Continuing education allowance:

If yes, annual amount for continuing education /graduate school: \$ _____

If yes, how much time does the congregation grant to the pastor per year for continuing education/graduate school purposes?

Does the congregation offer a sabbatical leave?

If yes, please describe: _____

Maximum amount of reimbursement for professional expenses (books, periodicals, memberships, vestments, etc.): \$ _____

Days off per week _____

Annual days of vacation, including the number of Sundays (should be based upon the pastor's total years of service in the ministry): _____

Does the congregation follow the District's salary compensation guidelines?

If no, describe the salary compensation guidelines used by the congregation: _____

Additional information

Signed this _____ day of _____, A.D. _____

By: (1) _____ Position: _____

(2) _____ Position: _____

(3) _____ Position: _____

(4) _____ Position: _____

on behalf of

District:

ACCEPTANCE

I, _____, after prayerful consideration hereby accept this call and with the help of Almighty God agree:

To assume willingly the obligations stated above and the responsibilities of this office as specified in this call document or as may be resolved and agreed on periodically;

To perform faithfully all duties of this office in accordance with the Word of God and the confessional standards of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as drawn from the Sacred Scriptures and found in the Book of Concord;

To exemplify the Christian life in all that I do and say, working in concert with all others in order that my ministry in your midst may be a blessing to many people, to our church, and especially to our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Signed this _____ day of _____, A. D. _____

by _____

Address: _____

Additional Congregational Information for

(Complete Name and Address of Congregation)

In the interest of forming a strong, healthy relationship with our new pastor, we share the following information with you to tell you who we are, what our current ministry practices are, the resources we bring to the partnership, and a brief missional history of our congregation. Our hope is that together we may establish a healthy working partnership that enables us to grow in our relationship with God and one another and to strengthen our witness and service in the community.

A. Description of the Community

1. Approximate size of community (check one):

- ☐ Isolated rural
- ☐ Rural
- ☐ Town (2,500-5,000)
- ☐ City (5,001-10,000)
- ☐ City (10,001-25,000)
- ☐ City (25,001-50,000)
- ☐ City (50,001-100,000)
- ☐ City (100,001-200,000)
- ☐ Large city (200,001+)

- ☐ Inner city
- ☐ Urban
- ☐ Suburban

2. Population trend (check one):

- ☐ Growing
- ☐ Static
- ☐ Declining

3. Sociological information:

- a. Major industries: _____
- b. Predominant vocations: _____

4. Racial/ethnic composition: _____

5. Educational opportunities: (check all that apply)

- ☐ Elementary schools
- ☐ High schools
- ☐ Universities
- ☐ Other institutions. Please describe: _____

6. Names and baptized membership of other Lutheran churches and distance from church

7. Major denominations represented:

8. General description of climate:

B. Description of the Congregation:

1. Year organized: _____
2. Baptized membership: Present _____ 3 yrs. ago _____ 5 yrs. ago _____
3. Confirmed membership: Present _____ 3 yrs. ago _____ 5 yrs. ago _____
4. Average Sunday church attendance: Present _____ 3 yrs. ago _____ 5 yrs. ago _____
5. Sunday school:
 - a. Enrollment: Present _____ 3 yrs. ago _____ 5 yrs. ago _____
 - b. Average attendance: Present _____ 3 yrs. ago _____ 5 yrs. ago _____
 - c. Number of teachers: Present _____ 3 yrs. ago _____ 5 yrs. ago _____
6. Other salaried staff positions in congregation:

7. Description of church facilities:

8. Total annual current operating budget in dollars: \$ _____
Amount committed to:
 - a. General congregation expenses: \$ _____
 - b. Work-at-large: \$ _____
9. Total capital debt and amount of annual amortization payments:
 - a. Debt: \$ _____
 - b. Payment: \$ _____
10. Average tenure of pastors during the last 20 years: _____
11. Length of present pastoral vacancy: _____ as of _____
(date)

C. Description of the Membership:

1. Age profile by percentage (should equal 100%):
_____ % 0-13 _____ % 14-18 _____ % 19-25 _____ % 26-45 _____ % 46-65 _____ % 66 +
2. Major occupations of members by approximate percentage (should equal 100%)
_____ % Professional _____ % Business _____ % Labor _____ % College Students _____ % Farming _____ % Retired
3. Racial/ethnic composition by approximate percentage:

D. Significant parish events in the last five years:

E. Congregational Activities:

1. Outreach/evangelism

2. Social ministry

3. Community involvement

F. Christian Day School/Preschool/Daycare (own a school, member of a school association, grade levels, provide tuition assistance to members, interest in starting a school, etc.):

G. Bible study program (who leads Bible studies, when they are held, type of studies in the past, etc.):

H. Worship practices (style of worship, chanting, hymnal[s] used, use of special liturgies, printed orders of service, use of children's messages, use of multimedia equipment, use of acolytes, crucifers, torchbearers, lectors, ushers, Public Address [PA] System, etc.):

I. Administration of the Sacraments:

1. Baptism (preparation, sponsors, follow up, etc.)

2. The Lord's Supper (frequency, vessels used, assistants in distribution, who may commune, etc.)

J. Facilities:

1. Church

2. School

3. Church Office (location, equipment provided, etc.)

4. Pastor's Study (location, equipment provided, etc.)

K. Staff:

1. Church secretary (availability, hours worked, duties performed, compensation, etc.)

2. Other staff (please describe)

L. Role of women (suffrage, positions of leadership, limitations, etc.):

M. Current congregational policies:

1. Weddings for non-members

2. Funerals for non-members

3. Other policies

N. Pastoral approach desired in our pastor regarding addressing issues and making changes in the congregation:

O. Team Ministry (lines of accountability, division of responsibilities, etc.):

P. Challenges facing the congregation:

1. At the present time

2. In the future

Q. Special pastoral qualities needed in our next pastor:

R. Special concerns:

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Ver. 4.9.3

[illegible]

1. Congregation (specify group or individual): _____

2. Vacancy pastor: _____ Email Address: _____
Cell Phone No: _____

3. Circuit visitor: _____ Email Address: _____
Cell Phone No: _____

4. Contact person: _____ Telephone No: _____
Email Address: _____
Cell Phone No: _____

When calling a seminary graduate through the Board of Assignments, the original (signed) complete call document ("Diploma of Vocation," "Supplement to the Diploma of Vocation," "Compensation Information," "Summary Page for pages 1-6," "Additional Congregational Information," and "Summary Page for pages 7-11") should be forwarded to the **District President** for his signature. Once he has signed the document, one copy will be returned to the calling body, one will be retained by the District President, and the original will be forwarded to the Board of Assignments.

(If request is for a seminary graduate)

Summary of the Call

(Position)

(Calling Body)

(Location)

(District of Which the Calling Body is a Member)

Basic cash salary for 12 months (do not include any other payments to the pastor which are designated below): \$ _____

Parsonage/Utilities Information

Does the congregation own a parsonage?

Average annual parsonage utility cost: \$ _____

Housing equity provided by the congregation?

Housing Allowance

Annual amount of housing allowance (including utility allowance) paid to the pastor: \$ _____

Auto Information

Mileage reimbursement paid to the pastor (instead of a car allowance)?

If yes, rate of mileage reimbursement per mile: \$ _____

Maximum amount of mileage reimbursement per year: \$ _____

Annual car allowance paid to the pastor?

If yes, annual amount of car allowance paid to the pastor: \$ _____

Benefits Information

Does the congregation provide a benefit package for the pastor through Concordia Plan Services?

If yes, which Plan package is provided?

If the congregation provides one of the packages that include the Concordia Health Plan (CHP), which coverage level option is currently provided?

If the congregation provides the CHP, who does the congregation pay premiums for:

Does the congregation provide a health care plan other than the Concordia Health Plan?

If yes, the congregation pays the other health plan premiums for:

If the congregation does not provide a package that includes the Concordia Retirement Plan and the Concordia Disability & Survivor Plan, does it provide other retirement benefits and/or disability coverage?

Is there additional income paid to the pastor to enable him to pay a portion of his self-employment tax?

Moving Information

Is there a maximum amount of moving expenses paid by the congregation?

If yes, maximum amount: \$ _____

Miscellaneous Information

Continuing education/Graduate school allowance?

If yes, annual amount for continuing education /graduate school: \$ _____

Annual days of vacation, including the number of Sundays (should be based upon the pastor's total years of service in the ministry): _____

Does the congregation follow the District's salary compensation guidelines?

Summary of Additional Congregational Information for

Please note: The letters and numbers printed below reference the corresponding items on pages 7-11 of the call document.

A. Description of the Community

1. Approximate size of community (check one):

<input type="radio"/> Isolated rural	<input type="radio"/> City (5,001-10,000)	<input type="radio"/> City (50,001-100,000)
<input type="radio"/> Rural	<input type="radio"/> City (10,001-25,000)	<input type="radio"/> City (100,001-200,000)
<input type="radio"/> Town (2,500-5,000)	<input type="radio"/> City (25,001-50,000)	<input type="radio"/> Large city (200,001+)

<input type="radio"/> Inner city
<input type="radio"/> Urban
<input type="radio"/> Suburban

3. Sociological information:

a. Major industries: _____

b. Predominant vocations: _____

4. Racial/ethnic composition: _____

5. Educational opportunities: (check all that apply)

☐ Elementary schools

☐ High schools

☐ Universities

☐ Other institutions. Please describe: _____

6. Names and baptized membership of other Lutheran churches and distance from church

7. Major denominations represented:

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B. Description of the Congregation:

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3. Confirmed membership: Present _____ 3 yrs. ago _____ 5 yrs. ago _____

4. Average Sunday church attendance: Present _____ 3 yrs. ago _____ 5 yrs. ago _____

6. Other salaried staff positions in congregation:

8. Total annual current operating budget in dollars: \$ _____

9. Total capital debt: _____

F. Christian Day School/Preschool/Daycare (own a school, member of a school association, grade levels, provide tuition assistance to members, interest in starting a school, etc.):

Q. Special pastoral qualities needed in our next pastor:

R. Special concerns:
