

CALL PROCESS MANUAL

(November 2018)

Synod of Alberta &
the Territories

Evangelical Lutheran Church
in Canada

For we are labourers together with God.
1 Corinthians 3:9

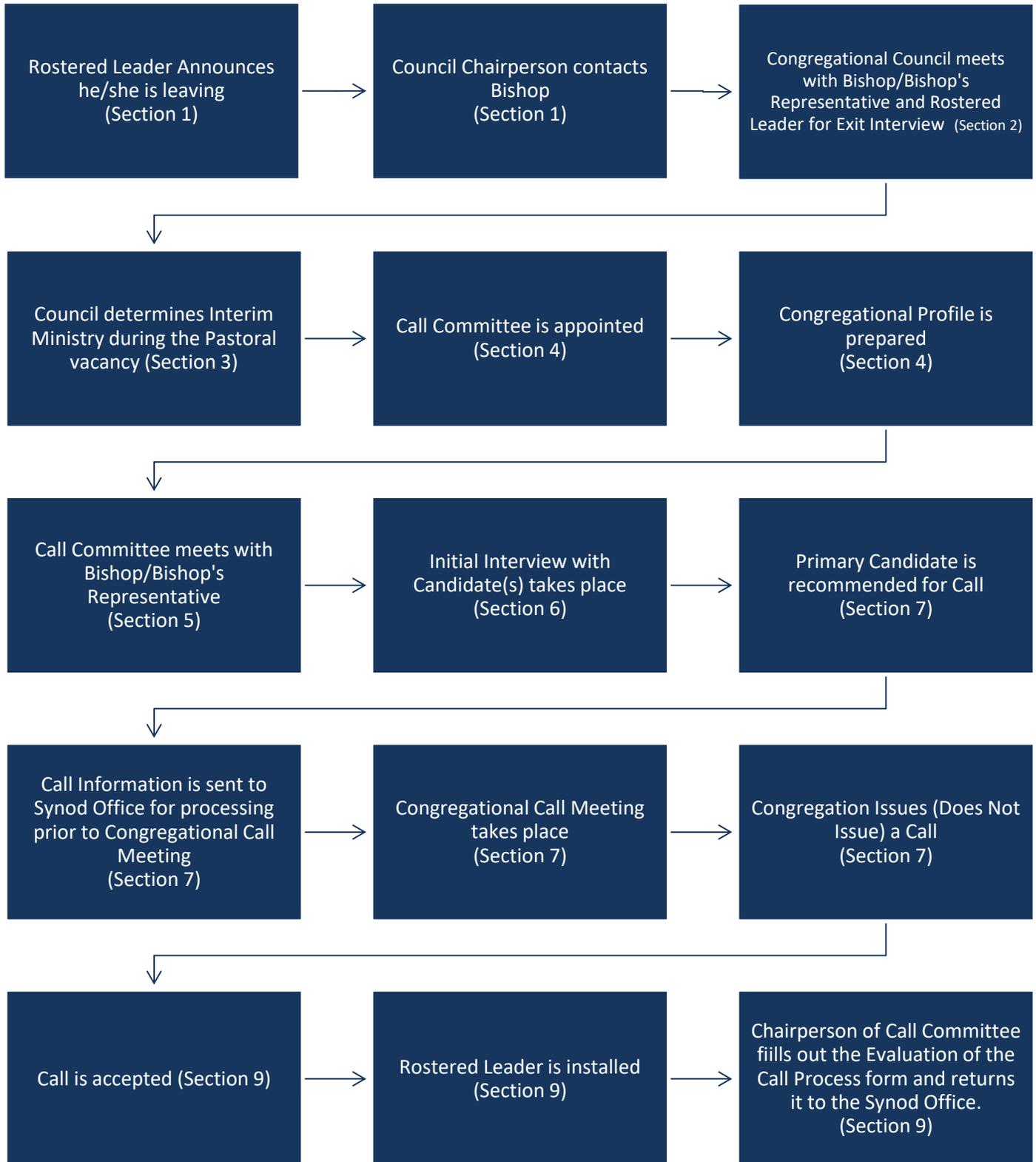


CONTENTS

SECTION 1 – STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN THE ROSTERED LEADER RESIGNS.	4
SECTION 2 - FIRST MEETING: CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL WITH BISHOP OR BISHOP'S REP	5
SECTION 3 - MINISTRY DURING THE PASTORAL VACANCY.	5
SECTION 4 - APPOINTMENT OF THE CALL COMMITTEE.....	7
SECTION 5 – CALL COMMITTEE & BISHOP OR BISHOP’S REPRESENTATIVE MEETING.....	9
SECTION 6 - THE CALL COMMITTEE GOES TO WORK	10
SECTION 7 - THE PRIMARY CANDIDATE IS RECOMMENDED FOR CALL.....	11
SECTION 8 - SPECIAL SITUATIONS.....	13
SECTION 9 - THE CALL IS ACCEPTED!	13
APPENDIX A - CHECKLIST OF STEPS INVOLVED IN CALLING A NEW ROSTERED LEADER.....	17
APPENDIX B – EXIT INTERVIEW	20
APPENDIX C – REPORT OF EXAMINATION OF PAROCHIAL RECORDS	22
APPENDIX D – GUIDELINES: ROSTERED LEADERS RELATING TO PREVIOUSLY SERVED PARISHES	26
APPENDIX E – GUIDELINES FOR PASTORAL TRANSITION	27
Sample Letter to Congregational Members When a Pastor Leaves	28
APPENDIX F – SERVICE OF FAREWELL AND GODSPEED	29
APPENDIX G – COUNCIL WORKSHEET FOR INTERIM MINISTRY	31
APPENDIX H – INTERIM MINISTER EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT	33
APPENDIX I - COMPENSATION GUIDELINES	34
APPENDIX J - INTERIM MINISTRY COVENANT	35
Sample #1	35
APPENDIX J - INTERIM MINISTRY COVENANT	36
Sample #2	36
APPENDIX K - SERVICE OF INSTALLATION OF THE CALL COMMITTEE	37
APPENDIX L - INTERIM ROSTERED LEADER’S REPORT TO THE BISHOP AND STAFF	38
APPENDIX M - DEVELOPING A CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE	39
Sample Letter to Congregational Members.....	43
APPENDIX N - NOMINATIONS FORM.....	44
APPENDIX O - COMPARISON OF CANDIDATES MINISTRY REQUIREMENTS	45
APPENDIX P - INTERVIEW FEEDBACK “CONFIDENTIAL”	46

APPENDIX Q - SAMPLE LETTERS FOR A CALL COMMITTEE	47
APPENDIX R - CALL COMMITTEE SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR A CANDIDATE	48
APPENDIX S - CANDIDATE SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR THE CALL COMMITTEE	49
APPENDIX T – CALL DOCUMENTS	50
Letter of Call	50
Employment Agreements.....	50
Compensation Guidelines for Synod of Alberta and the Territories	50
APPENDIX U - PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES FOR A CALL MEETING	52
Certification of Call Procedure – Sample document	54
APPENDIX V - SIX-NINE MONTH MINISTRY REVIEW	55
APPENDIX W - EVALUATION OF THE CALL PROCESS	57
APPENDIX X - CALL MEETINGS - CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERSHIP SIGN IN SHEET	58
APPENDIX Y - DEVOTIONS FOR CALL COMMITTEES	61
Five Brief Devotions for Congregations in Call Process	61

The Call Process at a glance.



SECTION 1 – STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN THE ROSTERED LEADER RESIGNS.

1.1. SUBMITTING THE LETTER OF RESIGNATION

The Rostered leader, upon submitting his/her resignation to a congregational council, shall send a copy of the Letter of Resignation to the Bishop and to the conference dean.

1.2 ACCEPTING THE LETTER OF RESIGNATION

The Congregational Council, at a regular or called meeting, accepts the rostered leader's Letter of Resignation. An appropriate action immediately following the council's acceptance of the resignation, would be a letter to all members of the congregation which states that the congregation council has accepted the rostered leader's letter of resignation and the last date on which the rostered leader will serve the congregation. A gesture of love and a courtesy would include a statement of thanks to the rostered leader and family for their partnership with the congregation in Christ's work.

1.3 CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL CONTACTS THE BISHOP

The Congregational Council Chairperson should contact the Bishop's office officially to confirm the rostered leader's resignation and the effective date of that resignation. The Bishop's office will arrange a time to meet with the congregational council.

1.4 RECEIVE THE CONGREGATION'S RECORDS.

The Parish Register of each congregation shall remain the property of the congregation. It is the responsibility of the rostered leader to maintain these records in proper and up-to-date order. The parochial records consist of a record of all baptisms, confirmations, members received, dismissed, or removed from the congregation roll for any reason. The Secretary of the Congregation should meet with the rostered leader prior to his/her departure to review and receive the parochial records. The conference Dean shall review the records and submit the form (Appendix C) to the synod office.

1.5 SETTLE FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS.

A congregation shall settle financial obligations with the departing rostered leader before calling a successor. This will include salary as well as all benefits due as of the effective date of resignation. Any debt or other financial obligation incurred by the rostered leader to the congregation shall likewise be satisfactorily settled, if a departing rostered leader makes special requests which extend beyond normal and customary departure procedures, these should be shared with the Bishop before being officially granted, and any action taken shall be properly recorded in the congregation council minutes.

1.6 HONOUR AND THANK THE RESIGNING ROSTERED LEADER AND FAMILY.

The Congregational Council may plan appropriate expressions of appreciation for the resigning rostered leader and family. Possibilities may include a reception, including invitations to fellow rostered leaders, community leaders, and friends of the congregation; a formal dinner to include those suggested above; and a love gift to the rostered leader and family as an added expression of thanks. A special committee may be appointed to recommend the type of event and to coordinate all the congregation's expressions of appreciation. A Service of Godspeed would be appropriate to use as a part of the liturgy on the rostered leaders last Sunday with the congregation. See Appendix F for a suggested order of service.

SECTION 2 - FIRST MEETING: CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL WITH BISHOP OR BISHOP'S REPRESENTATIVE.

2.1 FIRST MEETING PARAMETERS

Acknowledging that only God knows our true needs, the congregation agrees to pray for openness to God's guidance. Agenda items to be considered follow in 2.2 – 2.6.

2.2 CONDUCT AN EXIT INTERVIEW.

An exit interview may be conducted by the Bishop/Bishop's Representative with the resigning rostered leader and the Congregational Council and/or Mutual Ministry Committee. The purpose of the interview is to evaluate the ministry, to identify areas of potential growth for the rostered leader and congregation, and to celebrate the ministry. 'Appendix B – An Exit Interview' must be reviewed and completed in preparation for this meeting. The congregational council may, in consultation with the Bishop, choose to open this meeting to the entire congregation.

2.3 DISCUSS POSSIBILITIES FOR INTERIM MINISTRY. (Section 3)

2.4 DISCUSS SELECTION OF CALL COMMITTEE (See paragraph 4.1)

2.5 PROVIDE CALL PROCESS MANUALS FOR THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COUNCIL AND THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE CALL COMMITTEE.

2.6 PLAN TO COMPLETE A CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE STUDY. (See details under Second meeting, Section 4.)

SECTION 3 - MINISTRY DURING THE PASTORAL VACANCY.

3.1 PASTORAL CARE DURING VACANCY

The Bishop of the synod is responsible, along with the congregation council, for the maintenance of pastoral care and leadership of the congregation in the interim. In order to fulfill this responsibility, the Bishop, in consultation with the congregation council, will appoint an interim rostered leader during the congregation's pastoral vacancy. Normally, appointment of the interim rostered leader will be made by the Bishop prior to the resigning rostered leader's departure or shortly thereafter.

3.2 TYPES OF INTERIM MINISTRIES

3.2.1 An interim rostered leader who is appointed to serve pastoral needs while the congregation is in the call process seeking a regularly called rostered leader, and serves until the new rostered leader arrives. This type of interim ministry may involve the full or part-time services of the rostered leader who is appointed.

3.2.2 An interim rostered leader who is appointed for a specific time to serve the congregation in a specific ministry of transition to help the congregation move toward the process of seeking a regularly called rostered leader. This type of interim ministry may involve the full-time or part-time services of the rostered leader who is appointed and may utilize other resource people to address specific concerns.

3.2.3 An interim rostered leader who is appointed to serve a congregation which may not be seeking a regularly called rostered leader. This is a specialized type of ministry which will be defined by the Bishop in consultation with the congregation.

3.2.4 An interim rostered leader who is appointed to serve in a multiple-staff congregation may be an associate/assistant rostered leader already serving in the congregation, or may be a rostered leader from outside the congregation. If the associate/assistant rostered leader is appointed to be the interim senior rostered leader, then that person would not be eligible for a call as senior rostered leader.

3.3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INTERIM ROSTERED LEADER.

The interim rostered leader will be responsible for oversight of the basic pastoral needs of the congregation. Such needs normally include emergency calls at home or in the hospital, catechetical instruction, pastoral acts, pastoral guidance for the council and the congregation, including attendance of council and congregational meetings, etc. Availability of the interim rostered leader for many duties may be limited, indicating the need for congregational committees to be active. It is the duty of the congregational council to inform parishioners of the interim rostered leader's duties to avoid unrealistic expectations of a person who likely will not be a full-time rostered leader. Appendices G and H provide a worksheet and sample contracts for interim ministry. The council also needs to designate persons or committees to oversee certain aspects of the congregation's interim life—such as the newsletter, care of the church property, and other administrative tasks. Consultation with the church secretary and other staff will aid in such designations. Such arrangements need to be communicated to members of the congregation.

3.4 COMPENSATION OF THE INTERIM ROSTERED LEADER.

The interim rostered leader shall be compensated for the time spent serving the pastoral needs of the congregation. The terms of such compensation shall be detailed in the agreement between the interim rostered leader and the congregation council (Appendix I). The congregational council should refer to the synod's current "Compensation Guidelines for Rostered leaders" in setting the terms of compensation (found online at <http://albertasynod.ca/administration/compensation-guidelines/>).

3.5 AUTHORITY OF THE INTERIM ROSTERED LEADER.

The interim rostered leader, a minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, may be a rostered leader of a neighbouring congregation, a rostered leader under call to special service, a rostered leader on leave from call, or a retired rostered leader. During service to the congregation, the interim rostered leader shall have the rights and duties of a regularly called rostered leader. However, the synodical constitution prohibits any involvement of the interim in the call process. It should be understood by all parties that the interim rostered leader shall not be a candidate for rostered leader of the congregation.

3.6 SERVICE OF INSTALLATION OF THE INTERIM ROSTERED LEADER.

The interim rostered leader should be officially installed by the chairperson of the congregational council at a Sunday worship service. See sample format entitled "Interim Ministry Covenant" (Appendix J).

3.7 PROGRESS REPORTS.

The interim rostered leader will submit an "Interim Rostered leader's Report" to the Synod office each month (Appendix L).

3.8 CLOSURE OF THE INTERIM RELATIONSHIP.

Upon completion of service, the Interim Rostered leader shall certify to the Bishop of the synod that the parochial records for the period for which he or she was responsible are in order. It is appropriate for some recognition of services to be arranged by the congregation council at the conclusion of the interim rostered leader's appointment.

3.9 FORMER ROSTERED LEADER'S RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE CONGREGATION.

The interim rostered leader should normally be requested to perform all ministerial acts within the congregation. Members of the congregation shall not call on the former rostered leader or any other rostered leader for ministerial acts without the express invitation of the interim rostered leader. The Bishop will instruct the departing rostered leader not to return to the congregation to conduct services, including weddings, baptisms and funerals, after termination of ministry there, unless invited by the interim or newly-called rostered leader. The former rostered leader should not return for pastoral acts for at least a full year after departing in order that the transition might be completed. This matter would be an appropriate one to discuss in the exit interview. This procedure emphasizes that a congregation begins to grow toward the future rather than clinging to the past. (Appendix D)

3.10 SUPPLY ROSTERED LEADERS.

The responsibility for securing rostered leaders to conduct worship services lies with the congregational council in consultation with the Bishop's office. In those cases where the interim rostered leader cannot fulfill this function, the synod stands ready, when requested, to assist the council in arranging for supply rostered leaders. All supply rostered leaders should be compensated for their services according to the current synodical guidelines (**found online at <http://albertasynod.ca/administration/compensation-guidelines/>**).

SECTION 4 - APPOINTMENT OF THE CALL COMMITTEE.

4.1 GENERAL NOTES

The call committee is extremely important in the selection of a new rostered leader. Following the Congregational Study, the call committee may be the congregational council, may be appointed by the congregational council, or elected by the congregation in accordance with the congregational constitution.

4.2 PURPOSE OF THE CALL COMMITTEE.

This committee, seeking God's will through prayer, interviews, and possible visits, will recommend a candidate to the congregation for call. Members of the committee may remain as a transitions committee for the rostered leader's early ministry.

4.3 MAKE-UP OF THE CALL COMMITTEE.

If it is not the congregational council, the number of persons on the call committee may be determined by the congregation's constitution. If a number is not specified in the constitution, then the congregation

council shall determine the appropriate number for the committee. The call committee should have as much of a cross-section of the congregation as is possible. A very workable number of persons in the group is five to seven people. Each should be an active member who communes and contributes regularly.

4.4 CHAIR OF THE CALL COMMITTEE.

The call committee chairperson may be appointed by the congregation council or elected by the committee membership. It is preferable that the Call Committee Chairperson be someone other than the Congregational Council Chairperson. A secretary should be designated to record the actions of the committee and to communicate all actions of the committee to the Bishop.

4.5 INSTALLATION OF THE CALL COMMITTEE.

This is an opportunity for prayerful commitment of the call committee members to their task, to ask God's blessings, to invite the prayers of the congregation throughout the process, and to introduce the call committee to the congregation. Appendix K provides a sample service.

4.6 EXPENSES OF THE CALL COMMITTEE.

All expenses of the call committee while they are performing responsibilities of the call process should be paid by the congregation. This should be agreed upon at the establishment of the committee.

4.7 CANDIDATES ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE A CALL.

All approved ordained and diaconal ministers in the ELCIC and ELCA are eligible for a call, with the exception of an interim or a supply rostered leader in the congregation he or she is serving.

4.8 CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL AND CALL COMMITTEE CONDUCT THE CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE STUDY.

The congregational profile will provide an opportunity to gather information, clarify needs for pastoral ministry, and explore the congregation's history and vision for the future. Members may ask to have the congregation complete portions of the Congregational Profile Form (Appendix M). Information gained would be used by the Bishop to help match candidate and congregation, and by the call committee in interviewing candidates.

4.9 RESULTS OF THE CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE STUDY.

The congregational profile study should be completed and the written report of the results of that study be sent to the Bishop's office and to the chair of the congregational council who will then distribute them to the members of the council and call committee, when appointed.

4.10 SUBMISSION OF NAMES OF POSSIBLE CANDIDATES FOR ROSTERED LEADER.

Before the second meeting with the Bishop or Bishop's representative, the chair of the congregational council should let it be known that any persons in the congregation who have suggestions of possible candidates may submit those names to the Council Chair (Appendix N). The Council Chair then will share those names with the Bishop for consideration before the second meeting.

SECTION 5 – CALL COMMITTEE & BISHOP OR BISHOP'S REPRESENTATIVE MEETING

5.1 SECOND MEETING:

The call committee meets with the Bishop or Bishop's representative. Five brief devotions for Call Committees to use when gathering for meetings can be found in Appendix Y.

The Bishop or Bishop's representative will lead the call committee in prayer and in a discussion of the basic procedures to be followed:

- Analyze the results of the Congregational Profile Study as to the ministry needs and desires of the congregation. Also review the profiles of the candidates under consideration (Appendix N).
- Agree to confidentiality. *This is a must.* The ministry of a rostered leader may be jeopardized or division may be created within the congregation if news of consideration is prematurely divulged prior to the interview stage.
- A two-thirds majority is required before the call committee may recommend a candidate to the congregation for call.

5.1.1 CANDIDATE SUGGESTIONS

The Bishop or Bishop's representative will discuss with the call committee specific candidates. These candidates may include ones suggested to the Bishop or Bishop's representative from persons in the congregation, candidates who have expressed a desire to be considered in this congregation, as well as ones whom the Bishop or Bishop's representative feels might serve well in this particular call. In this conversation, it should be kept in mind that the Spirit calls us to move beyond discrimination in age, race, and gender.

5.1.2 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

The Bishop or Bishop's representative will leave with the committee biographical information of the candidates whom the call committee will consider. Occasionally a call committee requests to receive the name of only one candidate at a time (this would be the Primary Candidate), and to work with that candidate until the completion of the process. In that case, the Bishop or Bishop's representative may be willing to provide one candidate and request that candidate to refrain from talking with other call committees until the process is complete. In such cases the call committee may elect to bypass one or more steps in the process in presenting the name of the Primary Candidate to the congregation for call.

5.1.2.1 If the call committee is open to considering a seminary graduate, the Bishop or Bishop's representative will present one seminarian for consideration. This person becomes the primary candidate (cf. 6:10). Should the committee determine that they cannot present this person for call, they will inform the candidate and the Bishop, and may ask for another seminarian if one is available, or request candidates in accordance with 5.1.2.

5.1.3 WHEN THE COMMITTEE REMOVES AN INDIVIDUAL FROM CONSIDERATION, THIS IS TO BE REPORTED

The Bishop needs to be informed immediately and sent the interview feedback from Appendix P. If, however, the committee decides to continue the process with a particular individual, he/she should be informed. The call committee should communicate either decision to the candidate both orally and in written form. (Sample letters are in Appendix Q.)

SECTION 6 - THE CALL COMMITTEE GOES TO WORK

6.1. PREPARATION FOR THE INITIAL INTERVIEW/VISIT.

First consideration should be given to conducting a preliminary telephone interview to determine the interest and suitability of a candidate, as this can often be determined without going to the expense and inconvenience of a more formal interview, and will reduce the list to the candidates the call committee wishes to interview in person. If a preliminary interview is favourable, an initial interview should be arranged where the candidate (and spouse) can visit the congregation site.

6.2 INITIAL INTERVIEW

Initial contact with a candidate should be made by telephone with the chairperson of the call committee, arranging a time for an interview with the call committee. It is recommended that this initial interview take place at the site of the calling congregation. Prior to the initial interview, the chairperson of the call committee should send the candidate information about the congregation (such information should include copies of the congregational profile, bulletins, newsletters, a yearbook, year-end reports, etc.). The candidate might send the call committee similar material. A mock interview is often helpful in preparing the call committee for its first interview. The initial interview (and indeed all meetings of the call committee) should begin with prayer asking the guidance of the Holy Spirit throughout the meeting. Expenses of the candidate, including overnight accommodations and travel where indicated, should be paid by the congregation.

6.3 GUIDED TOUR

Plan to provide a guided tour of the congregation's facilities and of the community including churches, businesses, neighborhoods of all types, schools, hospitals, recreation facilities, etc. Include an opportunity for the candidate to meet members of the congregation at a pot luck meal, dessert or some other type of informal gathering.

6.4 STYLES OF LEADERSHIP, GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS

During this initial interview, the call committee and candidate should explore styles of leadership, goals, and expectations for ministry. Each member of the call committee might explain one area of ministry and take the lead in questioning the candidate in that area. (Education, Youth, Evangelism, Worship, etc.) Suggested questions for the interview are provided. (Appendix R).

6.5 COMPENSATION

It is appropriate to initiate some "ballpark" compensation discussion in this initial interview, to be sure that the salary package is adequate. However, details and specifics should come later if the process continues.

6.6 CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE STUDY RESULTS

The call committee and candidate should review the results of the Congregational Profile Study and any other information that seems appropriate. Some questions that the committee and the rostered leader may want to ask are provided. (Appendix R).

6.7 VISITING THE CANDIDATE

If the interview process has been favourable, members of the call committee may wish to visit the candidate in his/her congregation for a worship service. In doing this, it is helpful to telephone ahead of time to insure that the candidate will be there on that particular occasion. The call committee needs to be sensitive to the impact its visit makes on the congregation.

6.8 CANCELLATION BY CALL COMMITTEE

If the call committee should decide that it is no longer interested in recommending a candidate for call, the following steps should be taken:

- a) the chair of the call committee notifies the candidate and Bishop immediately;
- b) the members of the call committee jointly complete an Interview Feedback Form (Appendix P) and mail it (marked "Confidential") to the Bishop.

6.9 CANCELLATION BY CANDIDATE

If a candidate should decide that he or she is no longer interested in pursuing the call process with a congregation, he or she shall notify the chair of the call committee and the Bishop immediately.

6.10 A PRIMARY CANDIDATE IDENTIFIED

This process may be followed with each of the candidates selected for interview until one candidate is decided upon as the Primary Candidate. Until a primary candidate is chosen, candidates and call committees may be talking with others.

6.11 THE BISHOP IS NOTIFIED

The Call Committee Chairperson notifies the Bishop that they have selected a Primary Candidate. As in 5.04.03, the Bishop contacts the Primary Candidate and requests that candidate to refrain from talking with other call committees until the process with this congregation has been completed.

SECTION 7 - THE PRIMARY CANDIDATE IS RECOMMENDED FOR CALL

7.1 THE CALL COMMITTEE FINALIZES ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE CANDIDATE.

7.1.1 The candidate and call committee agree on the terms of the call and compensation package. The "Letter of Call" and the accompanying Memorandum of Compensation (Appendix T) should be discussed in detail. Moving details may be discussed at this time as well. (Note: The congregation is responsible for all moving expenses.)

7.1.2. In the case of calls for new seminary graduates, it is expected that they will participate in the First Call program of the four Western Canadian Synods of the ELCIC. First Call is a program of three years of mandatory continuing education. We are confident that this program will help new rostered

leaders become successful in their call to ordained ministry. The congregation will need to include the cost of this three year program in their budget.

7.1.3 Details for the Letter of Call and Memorandum of Compensation are to be forwarded (may be done via email) to the synod office to prepare and return to the congregation for the congregational call meeting. Appendix T has sample forms for reference; please note that congregations and/or call committees do not fill out, nor are they to create, the forms used for a Call meeting.

7.1.4 A congregational meeting is called according to the congregational constitution with time and date communicated to the synod office as soon as possible in order for the call documents to be prepared and returned to your congregation, and so a Bishop's Representative at the meeting can be arranged for.

7.1.5 Consider an opportunity for the candidate to meet the congregational membership following the approval of the call committee and prior to the congregation's vote.

7.2 THE CONGREGATION CONSIDERS THE CALL.

7.2.1 The congregational meeting to recommend the candidate should be called according to the congregation's constitution. A sign-in sheet needs to be available for congregational members to sign before the meeting commences. An example can be found in Appendix X. You will also need to have a list of voting members names prepared before the meeting for 'scrutineers' from within your congregation to check off as people enter the assembly.

The Bishop or Bishop's representative conducts the meeting, and the Chairperson of the call committee presents the information on the candidate, the Letter of Call, and Memorandum of Compensation. Full discussion is encouraged.

A secret ballot giving approval by at least two-thirds of the voting members present at the meeting will be required to issue a call. The number of ballots cast must equal the number of members signed up as attending the meeting. In a multiple point parish, each congregation must approve by at least a 2/3 majority. The Parish Council will then ratify the decision by signing the Letter of Call document before sending to the Synod office. See Appendix U for Procedural Guidelines for a Call Meeting.

7.2.2 If the congregation issues the call, the "Letter of Call" and the Memorandum of Compensation should be signed by the persons authorized by the congregation. If the Bishop is not present, the Bishop's representative conveys the Letter of Call to the Bishop. The chair of the congregation council should telephone the candidate to inform of the congregation's decision. The Bishop will sign the "Letter of Call", attach the Synod seal, and send it to the candidate. It is appropriate for the call committee to serve as a Transition Committee on a temporary basis until a mutual ministry committee can be established.

7.2.3 If the congregation does not issue the call, the decision is communicated to the Bishop, if not present, and candidate by the chair of the call committee and the Bishop provides the chair of the call committee with additional names and the process begins again with the initial contact.

7.2.4 A rostered leader will acknowledge receipt of a "Letter of Call", and within thirty days of receipt inform in writing the person named in the Letter of Call of his or her decision. A copy of all correspondence is to be sent to the Bishop. If a rostered leader declines a call the process reverts to Section 6.

SECTION 8 - SPECIAL SITUATIONS

8.1 TERM CALLS.

Normally a call is without limitation of term; (the synodical bylaws (Part III, Section 5) makes provision for what is called a "term" Call) however, with the approval of the synodical Bishop expressed in writing, which sets forth a clear statement of the purpose to be served by such a departure from the normal rule of permanency of the call, a congregation may call a rostered leader for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the Bishop of this synod or a representative of the Bishop shall meet with the rostered leader and the chairperson of the congregation council or representative of the congregation for a review of the call. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of Part III, Section 5.

8.2 CO-TERMINUS CALLS.

In the case of multiple-staff ministries, if the call is to be extended to an associate rostered leader, assistant rostered leader or second rostered leader, a co-terminus call may be considered. A co-terminus call means that when a senior rostered leader resigns, the other rostered leader(s) will also resign at the same time. This does not preclude the latter from being considered for call to this same multiple-staff ministry in the same or different capacity. Whenever a co-terminus call is being considered, the Bishop will discuss the implications of such a call with the congregation council, call committee and candidate.

8.3 ROSTERED OR CLERGY COUPLES.

A rostered couple (the designation preferred to clergy couples) consists of rostered leaders who are married to each other. Some rostered couples prefer to serve in the same congregations and others wish to serve in different congregations. Couples and congregations can often work out creative ways of meeting each of their needs (for example, in situations where the need is for more than one or less than two rostered leaders in a congregation). In general, guidelines for team ministry would apply, but there may be special considerations concerning adequate housing, childcare allowance, taking holidays together, participation in synodical benefits packages, etc. Congregations should consider providing full continuing education contributions on behalf of both rostered leaders when serving part-time. The Synod office may be contacted for up-to-date information.

SECTION 9 - THE CALL IS ACCEPTED!

9.1 GENERAL NOTES

This can be an exciting time of thanksgiving and looking ahead for a congregation and their rostered leader-elect. At the same time, it can be a difficult time for the rostered leader-elect and family. A congregation must be very sensitive to the needs of its new rostered leader, from his or her leaving one ministry and moving to a new community to the start-up of a new ministry and everything that comes

with it. A rostered leader who accepts a call must be sensitive, not only to the congregation he or she is entering, but also to the congregation he or she is leaving, since both are experiencing a transition, whether joyful and grieving or a combination of both.

9.2 AREAS OF CONSIDERATION

There are several areas for consideration when a rostered leader has accepted a call. They are listed here, not necessarily in the order of their importance, but in the general order in which they occur.

9.3 STARTING TIME

The time frame from acceptance of call to arrival may vary and should be agreed upon by both the council of the congregation where the rostered leader is presently serving and the council of the calling congregation. The chair, or in the chair's absence, the vice-chair of the congregation council which is issuing a call should consult with the rostered leader-elect to determine when the acceptance can be announced publicly. A rostered leader shall notify both the former congregation and the new congregation when the new ministry will begin.

9.4 THE TRANSITION

9.4.1 Remember that all rostered leaders do not place equal priority on the same activities.

The habitual activities of a former rostered leader may be rare for a new rostered leader. During this new ministry transition it is important for a congregation and its new rostered leader to share expectations openly and negotiate priorities. A transition team can be very helpful during this time, up to a year after the rostered leader's arrival. It may be appropriate for the congregational council to ask the call committee to serve in this capacity since they are often the ones who know the new rostered leader best. In the course of the Call Process, they have already enjoyed a frank and open relationship, and have begun to develop a sense of mutual ministry. If some members of the call committee feel they cannot serve, they can be replaced as needed. A transition team can meet regularly with the rostered leader and other staff persons to discuss mutual concerns. Together they seek to develop and strengthen their ministry. Things to consider might include: the mission statement; short and long term goals; committee activities and their effectiveness; Sunday School/ Confirmation/ Youth/ Adult/ Senior programs; community involvement/support groups; building/debt considerations, etc.

9.4.2 Some of the beginning activities in which the transition team might be involved with include the initial move and settling in of their new rostered leader and his or her family. Arrangements for moving shall be made between the council and the new rostered leader.

9.4.3 The transition team/congregational council might consider:

- a. If the new rostered leader has a family, be sure to welcome every member and be sensitive to each of their needs. Decide on appropriate situations for introducing each of them to the congregation and the community.
- b. There may be a need for assistance in finding a job for the new rostered leader's spouse.
- c. If there are children in the family, consider possibilities for making their move to a new school and community easier since this can be a very difficult transition, especially for teenagers.
- d. If a housing allowance is provided, be ready to give hospitality to the rostered leader and his or her family when they are on house-hunting expeditions.

- e. If there is a parsonage, be sure there is an assigned group of people responsible for getting it ready for the new rostered leader, with redecoration completed, grass mowed and utilities turned on, etc.
- f. Prepare a collection of local maps, information on your community, a list of shops, schools, hospitals, professionals and other information that will help orient a new rostered leader upon arrival. (Notify "The Welcome Wagon" for example).
- g. Assure the new rostered leader has plenty of time to move and settle in. A meal or two brought in during this time helps greatly. At least a week is necessary to unpack, get utilities hooked up, etc.
- h. Be sure that the rostered leader's office has been cleaned and that all signs have been up-dated.
- i. Both rostered leader and congregation should acknowledge the importance of introduction into the community. This is valuable for all concerned and makes the transition easier. Consider all possible means of community introduction including newspapers, radio and television. Congregational members should introduce their new rostered leader to community groups, leaders and agencies, and rostered leaders should respond positively to these opportunities as often as possible.
- j. The congregation in dialogue with their new rostered leader may wish to plan welcome events; a canned and paper goods drive to stock the cupboards of the new home; a potluck or reception after the first service and/or the installation; a series of "cottage meetings" in members' homes to help the congregation get to know him or her and their family; etc.
- k. Suggest appropriate ways of entry into the congregation. It is helpful that certain visits be made within the first few weeks of a new ministry. There may also be certain key acts of ministry that need to be made soon after the new rostered leader arrives.

9.5 THE INSTALLATION

9.5.1 A date and time for the installation should be established between the new rostered leader, the congregation and the Bishop's office. The Bishop, Conference Dean or representative will install the new rostered leader. The new rostered leader, the person presiding at the installation, and members of the congregation arrange the service and select other participants. The service of installation should be held as soon as possible after a new rostered leader's arrival. (Examples of orders of worship with installation are available from the Bishop's office). Scheduling the installation for a Sunday afternoon or evening will enable the area rostered leaders and others in the community to attend. The order for the installation of a Rostered leader may be found in the Occasional Services Book. The rostered leader, in consultation with the congregational council, may want to designate the installation offering for a special cause. Due to Canada Revenue Agency restrictions, offerings may not be given to causes or ministries that originate outside of Canada.

9.5.2 Some congregations include a social event at the time of installation. This may be in the form of a reception or an informal dinner at which time the rostered leader and family can meet members and friends of the congregation and of the community.

9.6 CARING FOR THE NEW ROSTERED LEADER

9.6.1 Caring for care-givers is a ministry that congregations can provide for their rostered leaders. The transition team should insure that their new rostered leader has time for personal study, study in the company of others, participation in programs of continuing education, and extended study. The transitional team should keep the council and congregation aware of the need for adequate time for the rostered leader's self and family care: spiritual, physical and emotional.

9.6.2 The ELCIC suggests that each congregation have a Mutual Ministry Committee through which care and support of the rostered leader(s) can take place. If a transition team has been established, after they have been functioning for up to a year would be a good time to consider establishing a more permanent Mutual Ministry Committee. This committee may consist of members appointed by the rostered leader and members appointed by the Congregational Council, and may take leadership in reviewing at least annually the ministry of the congregation and the ministry of the rostered leader. A useful resource for setting up such a committee is The Mutual Ministry Committee, a booklet available from the Synod office.

9.7 EVALUATION

Evaluation is a normal process and is often first scheduled for six months after the installation and is scheduled annually thereafter. Again, the leadership for this procedure can lie with the transition team or the Mutual Ministry Committee. Such a process provides a way to review periodically how the ministry of the rostered leader and congregation meets shared expectations. Conflicts are reduced and effective ministry is enhanced when mutual expectations are clearly discussed. A sample six-month ministry review is in Appendix V.

9.8 A ROSTERED LEADER'S RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS/HER FORMER CONGREGATION

A rostered leader's leaving can be a very emotional time. Once the official relationship with the congregation has been terminated by resignation or retirement, the rostered leader should not return to do official pastoral acts, such as weddings, funerals, baptisms, etc. The rostered leader may return after a period of time, determined perhaps by the church constitution (suggestion: one year), to preach for a homecoming or other special occasion upon official invitation of the host rostered leader and the congregation council. The previous rostered leader may maintain friendships with members of a former congregation, but should never do so at the expense of undermining the present rostered leader's ministry. In short, a former rostered leader should remove himself or herself as completely as possible from the life and ministry of his or her former congregation.

9.9 IN CONCLUSION

When the process of calling a rostered leader has ended and the call has been accepted, years of opportunity for growth in Christ lie ahead as the congregation pursues God's mission through its ministry. The work done by the call committee will bear fruit through the mutual ministry of its congregation and new rostered leader. It would be very helpful for the Bishop and Synod Staff if the Chairperson of the Call Committee would fill out the Evaluation of the Call Process (Appendix W) and return it to the Synod office. This will ensure the process itself serves our congregations in the best way possible.

APPENDIX A - CHECKLIST OF STEPS INVOLVED IN CALLING A NEW ROSTERED LEADER

STEP 1 – CLOSURE - YOUR ROSTERED LEADER HAS RESIGNED. WHAT DO YOU DO?

- The congregation council accepts the resignation.
- The council chairperson contacts the office of the Bishop.
- A meeting of a representative of the Bishop and the congregation council is planned for.
- The secretary of the congregation receives the parochial records from the resigning rostered leader.
- The Conference Dean reviews the records and submits the form Appendix C to the Synod office.
- Financial matters with resigning rostered leader are settled.
- An exit interview (Appendix B) with the resigning rostered leader and congregational council is conducted.
- A copy of the “Call Process Manual” is given to the council chairperson.
- Plans are made with the Bishop for an interim ministry.
- Contact, and a contract, is made with the interim rostered leader.
- Plan to honour and thank the resigning rostered leader (and family).
- Plan for a Congregation Profile Study to be conducted.

STEP 2 – SELECTION - HOW DOES THE CONGREGATION BEGIN THE PROCESS OF THE SELECTION OF A NEW ROSTERED LEADER?

- A call committee is appointed according to your constitution.
 - Results of the Congregational Profile study are shared with the Bishop, the congregational council, and the call committee.
 - Members of the congregation may submit names of possible candidates for rostered leader to the council chair who will communicate these names to the Bishop for possible consideration
 - The council and call committee meet with the Bishop to review the congregation profile study and discuss the call process.
 - The call committee meets with the Bishop to discuss their task and to discuss the specifics of possible candidates about whom the Bishop gives and shares information.
- The Committee has received information about the recommended candidates. What next?
- The call committee prays for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
 - The call committee determines the process by which the list is reduced to the one they will recommend for call.
 - The list is reduced to those the call committee wishes to interview in person.

- The chairperson of the call committee contacts the candidates, setting up the interview and sending information about the congregation to each candidate.
- The interviews are conducted, providing congregational members opportunity to meet the candidate.
- The call committee might plan to visit the congregation of the candidate(s) for a worship service.
- If no candidate seems to be one they are being led to call, such information is conveyed to the candidates and the Bishop's office is contacted for additional names. (An interview feedback form, Appendix P, is filled out on each candidate and returned to the Bishop).
- The interview process is followed with each person until one candidate is decided upon as the Primary Candidate, by at least a 2/3 majority of the Call Committee.
- The choice of the Primary Candidate is communicated to the candidate and the Bishop.

STEP 3 - ELECTION

- A meeting is planned with the primary candidate and the call committee, in person or by phone. At this meeting, the "Letter of Call" and "Memorandum of Compensation" are discussed (these involve the particulars of compensation and the dates of the possible move.) Details of the Letter of Call and Memorandum of Compensation are forwarded to the Synod office for processing.
- A congregational meeting is called in accordance with constitutional requirements for the purpose of calling the candidate.
- The candidate and Bishop are informed of the date of the meeting.
- The Bishop appoints a representative to chair the congregational meeting.
- An informal gathering of the congregation may be called in order to provide further opportunity for the members to meet the candidate (and family).
- The congregation considers the call and the memorandum of compensation. A two-thirds majority vote by secret ballot is required to issue the call.
- The candidate is informed of the congregation's decision by the congregational chairperson.
- The official call form and memorandum of compensation is completed and signed and sent to the Bishop who will then sign it and send it to the candidate.
- The candidate acknowledges receipt of the Letter of Call to the congregation and Bishop.
- The candidate responds in writing within 30 days of receipt of Letter of Call to the Bishop and congregation.

STEP 4 - START UP - THE CANDIDATE HAS ACCEPTED YOUR CALL. WHAT IS LEFT TO DO?

- The council notifies the congregation that the call has been accepted and when the new rostered leader will begin the call.
- Prepare for the arrival of your new rostered leader.
- Make plans with the rostered leader and Bishop's office for a service of installation.
- Plan to acknowledge the end of service of your interim rostered leader.
- Welcome the new rostered leader (and every member of the rostered leader's family).
- Introduce your new rostered leader to the congregation and community.
- Make plans for the Transition Committee to begin working with the new rostered leader.
- Call Committee Chairperson fills out the Evaluation of the Call Process and mails it to the Bishop.

Thank you, Lord, for leading us together for service to you, your church, and the world. May you be glorified in our ministry in your name. Amen.

APPENDIX B – EXIT INTERVIEW

The Bishop or Bishop's representative may wish to conduct an exit interview with the outgoing rostered leader.

An exit interview can be very valuable. It is time for debriefing, for learning any details that may have been unknown, for hearing the rostered leader's hopes for the congregation, and for clarifying the relationship the departing rostered leader will have with the congregation after departure.

Unless there are very unusual circumstances, the interview can be most beneficial for both rostered leader and congregation. Members of the church council and the call committee should be present for the interview with the departing rostered leader.

The interview can be informal and light-hearted while also being frank and substantial. Two cautions: Don't try to reverse the resignation decision. Don't debate and argue with the rostered leader. Listen carefully and designate someone to take notes.

1. Time for sharing.

During the exit interview the following dialogue starter questions may be posed

A. to the rostered leader:

1. What were your hopes and dreams for the congregation when you began ministry here?
2. What were some of the surprises you encountered in your first months among us?
3. In what ways are we different now from when you came?
4. What have been some of your joys and sorrows during your ministry here?
5. What do you see as the strengths and the weaknesses of this congregation?
6. What are your present concerns for the congregation as you bring your ministry to a close?
7. How do you view the next ten years of this congregation's life?
8. What influenced you to decide to move?
9. What can we do to support our new rostered leader?
10. How can we help you (and your family) in your transition?

B. to the Council chair or designate:

1. What gifts has (rostered leader) given to this congregation during his/her ministry among you?
2. What are some events or memories which had special meaning that you would like to share?
(These may be humorous, as long as they are not too embarrassing to share.)
3. How will (rostered leader) be remembered by the members of _____ Lutheran Church/Parish?

2. Time for clarification.

It is imperative to clarify the relationship the departing rostered leader will have with the congregation after his/her departure. (See Appendix D)

The synod bylaws, Part III, Section 7 states:

7. "A minister shall not preach or perform any ministerial act within the parish of another rostered leader except at the latter's request or consent, or visit or perform ministerial acts in time of a ministerial vacancy, except by invitation of the interim minister or congregational council."

Discuss together what this means. Consider different scenarios such as possible requests for funerals, weddings and baptisms.

Discuss putting the following announcement in the bulletin and newsletter after the rostered leader leaves:

While Pastor/Diaconal Minister _____ is still a rostered leader, he/she is no longer our Pastor/Diaconal Minister. We love and cherish the friendship we have had, but we should not ask for further pastoral services such as counselling, baptisms, weddings and funerals.

In the event that circumstances do not allow for an exit interview or in the case where the rostered leader declines the opportunity, it is advisable for Council to consider holding such a meeting without the rostered leader.

In the event there may have been unresolved conflict associated with the departure of the rostered leader, it is important that opportunity be made available to reconcile those feelings prior to the arrival of the newly-called rostered leader. The structure of this session should be open and positive, avoiding any sense of 'bashing' the departing minister. The focus should be on finding resolution, self-examination, learning from mistakes, and preparing for the leadership of a new minister.

APPENDIX C – REPORT OF EXAMINATION OF PAROCHIAL RECORDS

Date: _____ Rostered leader: _____

Congregation: _____

Address: _____

Congregational Secretary: _____

Congregational Secretary's Address: _____

Conference: _____ Dean: _____

Date by which examination is to be completed: _____

Approved Constitution for Congregations, Article VII

Section 4. Every rostered leader shall

- g. Keep accurate membership records including baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials and communications, and submit a report of such statistics annually to the secretary of synod on forms provided by the church. The parish records shall be kept in a separate book which shall remain the property of the congregation;

Approved Constitution for Congregations, Article IV

Section 1. The membership of this congregation consists of those baptized persons who

- a. Have been baptized in this congregation, or
- b. Having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received either by
 - i. Transfer from another Lutheran congregation,
 - ii. Confirmation, or
 - iii. Affirmation of faith.

Section 2. Members of this congregation may also be classified as confirmed and voting.

- a. Confirmed members are baptized members who have been
 - i. Confirmed in this congregation,
 - ii. Received by adult baptism,
 - iii. Received by transfer as confirmed members from another Lutheran congregation,
 - iv. Received by affirmation of faith as baptized adults.
- b. Voting members are those confirmed or otherwise designated members who are members in good standing and have attained the age of ____ years.

Section 4. Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:

- a. Death,
- b. Resignation,
- c. Transfer or release
- d. Dismissal
- e. Inactivity

Section 5. A confirmed member who does not, for a period of one year, partake of Holy Communion, support the church with offerings and participate in the life and worship of the congregation shall be visited by the rostered leader and the congregation’s officers and be encouraged by them to active membership. If, during the second year, the confirmed member does not actively participate, the member’s name may be removed from the membership roster of the congregation, but it shall be retained on a responsibility list as one who is in special need of the congregation’s prayer and concern.

1. Location and Condition of Church Records - Church Register (“Master Records”)

Where is the Church Register kept at the present time? _____

Is the location fireproof? Yes _____ No _____

Describe the condition of the Church Register with regard to its completeness, accuracy, condition of binding: _____

2. Holy Communion Records

By what method are communion records kept (e.g. card file, notebook, church register, software) at the present time? _____

Where are these records kept at the present time? _____

Are they up-to-date? Yes _____ No _____

Are all members eligible to receive communion listed? Yes _____ No _____

Number of communicant members: _____

3. Verification of Membership Figures

A. Baptized Members

1. Number of baptized members reported to Synod December 31 of the current year.

a. Baptized members received since December 31:

By baptism _____

By transfer, etc. _____

Total received _____

b. Baptized members removed since December 31:

By transfer _____

Other losses _____

Total removed _____

2. Net gain or loss (subtract ‘removed’ from ‘received’) _____

3. Number of baptized members currently on the rolls _____

4. Number of baptized members currently listed in the Church Register _____

(by actual count)

5. Lines 3 and 4 should be the same. Are they? Yes _____ No _____

4. Record of Pastoral Acts

a. Are the Baptismal Records complete? Yes _____ No _____

b. Are the Confirmation Records complete? Yes _____ No _____

c. Are records indicating Members Received and Members Removed from Church Records complete?
Yes _____ No _____

d. Are the Marriage Records complete? Yes _____ No _____

e. Are Funeral Records complete? Yes _____ No _____

5. Current Membership List/File

a. By what method are names and addresses of members recorded? _____

b. Where are these records kept at the present time? _____

c. Are they up-to-date? Yes _____ No _____

6. If there are other records on file (file folders, etc.) that will be of interest to the next rostered leader, describe them and their location:

Mailing List Yes ___ No ___ Where _____

Sick/Shut-in List Yes ___ No ___ Where _____

Prospect List Yes ___ No ___ Where _____

7. Is the Congregational Constitution the ELCIC Model Constitution for Congregations? Yes _____ No _____

Comments: _____

8. Was the Parochial Report for last year sent in to National Office? Yes _____ No _____

We have examined the Parochial Records of the congregation and certify them to be in good order. The records have been placed in the hands of the Secretary of the Congregation, who will put them at the disposal of the interim rostered leader so that the interim rostered leader can record pastoral acts during a vacancy. As soon as a new rostered leader arrives, the secretary has been instructed to give them to the rostered leader.

Comments: _____

(Examination Date)

(Signature of Secretary of Congregation) (print name)

(Signature of Dean of Conference or authorized Rep.) (print name)

To be forwarded by the Dean to the Synod Office, with one copy retained in the parish office for the new rostered leader.

APPENDIX D – GUIDELINES: ROSTERED LEADERS RELATING TO PREVIOUSLY SERVED PARISHES

When a rostered leader accepts a call to a congregation, a sacred covenant is established between the rostered leader and the people of God in that place. In order for ministry to be strong and effective, the covenant needs to be strengthened and nurtured until God calls that rostered leader to another sector of ministry. When a rostered leader resigns a call, the covenant ends.

Synod of Alberta and the Territories By-Laws, Part III, Section 7 states:

“A minister shall not preach or perform any ministerial act within the parish of another minister except at the latter’s request or consent, or visit or perform ministerial acts in a time of a ministerial vacancy, except by invitation of the interim minister or congregational council. “

How does a rostered leader relate appropriately to members of a congregation where one has previously served? We offer the following guidelines so that good choices can be made which do not negatively affect the ministry of the people of God.

1. It is your responsibility as a former rostered leader to decline invitations to conduct pastoral acts (baptisms, weddings, funerals, hospital visits, etc.) in any former parish. It is important that you do not pass the burden of such decisions back to the rostered leader who currently holds that call, nor to elected congregational leaders. As professional people, we commit ourselves to act responsibly in these matters. For the sake of the church and the ongoing ministry of the congregation, “Do to others as you would have them do to you.” When we do that, our relating to members of previous parishes can be used by God to build up the body of Christ.
2. It is your responsibility as a former rostered leader to be supportive of your successor (even when that is difficult to do). It is your responsibility to sever pastoral ties with your former congregation in order that new relationships may be formed between the newly-called rostered leader and congregational members.
3. While the above statements are addressed to rostered leader, spouses of rostered leader must consider the same factors and also respect the recommendations made above. Spouses share a pastoral identity and, as a result, can become hindrances as easily as a rostered leader can.

The former rostered leader should not return for pastoral acts for at least a full year after departing in order that the transition might be completed.

APPENDIX E – GUIDELINES FOR PASTORAL TRANSITION

Congregations and pastors need to understand the professional ethics of ministry relating to former pastors, interim pastors and current pastors. A pastor who resigns or retires from a congregational ministry setting no longer serves as pastor to members of this congregation. Former pastors should not agree to pastoral responsibilities that rightfully belong to the current pastor of the congregation.

The purpose of this paper is to clearly state the proper boundaries for former pastors, interim pastors, current pastors, and members of congregations relative to ongoing pastoral responsibilities and duties.

Former Pastors

If a former pastor is asked to officiate at a special service by members, he/she should respond immediately by saying: “Thank you very much for asking me, but it is simply NOT appropriate for me to do that since I am no longer your pastor.” The former pastor then encourages them to call their present pastor.

It is very natural that members turn again to a former pastor who perhaps baptized their other children, or performed other weddings and funerals for family members while serving as the family’s pastor. Again, with great sensitivity and love, the former pastor should graciously decline and direct the family to their current pastor. As with other family friends, the former pastor might attend the service as a guest.

Former pastors should avoid the comment to members, “You’ll need to speak first to your present pastor about me doing this.” Such a comment places the current pastor in the very awkward situation of having to relinquish the pastoral role to the former pastor, or saying no to the members’ request and thus appearing insensitive, uncaring or insecure.

Interim Pastors

The interim pastor is the current pastor of the congregation until that time comes when the new pastor assumes the role of pastor and shepherd of the congregation. Whether part-time or full-time, the interim pastor should be contacted for all pastoral acts during the transition time. The former pastor should not be contacted by members to return to perform a pastoral responsibility during the transition.

Current Pastors

Current pastors should speak as positively as possible of the ministry of former pastors even though their style and vision might be very different. The current pastor should never feel pressured to relinquish his/her pastoral role to a former pastor. When a current pastor feels it is appropriate and healthy to invite a former pastor to return to participate in worship in a supportive role, he/she can certainly extend such an invitation.

Members and Friends of the Congregation

Members should avoid placing both the current and former pastors in awkward positions by seeking the pastoral services of a former pastor. Members should simply not ask for such favors from former pastors. By showing high regard to the current pastor, members affirm the significance of the pastoral office which was once held by the former pastor.

If the congregation, council or current pastor experiences difficulties with proper boundaries being maintained, the bishop should be contacted.

SAMPLE LETTER TO CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERS WHEN A PASTOR LEAVES

Date

To members of (...) Lutheran Church,

As you may have heard, Pastor (...) has resigned. This can leave many of us with questions about what will happen next. We may have concerns about the implications of this for worship and other congregational activities, and what this might look like going forward.

We recognize that while there are a feelings of God speed and good wishes for Pastor (...) this is also a time of grief and letting go taking place between Pastor (...) and most, if not all of the members of (...) Lutheran Church. It is very natural to want to ask Pastor (...) to come back and preside at special events, such as confirmation, baptisms, weddings and funerals; or to continue home and hospital visitation. In order not to put any congregation staff or rostered leader in a difficult position we ask that you refrain from doing so. Please allow any Interim Rostered Leader, and the new Rostered Leader who will follow, to become your pastor. We all need to be aware that roles are changing and others now must take over the pastoral roles and duties at (...) Lutheran Church.

There are clear boundaries set out for rostered leaders, in terms of pastoral care, in our Synodical by-laws. According to the Synod of Alberta and the Territories By-Laws, Part III, Section 7:

“A minister shall not preach or perform any ministerial act within the parish of another minister except at the latter’s request or consent, or visit or perform ministerial acts in a time of a ministerial vacancy, except by invitation of the interim minister or congregational council. “

When a rostered leader leaves a congregation, there are bonds of affection between the pastor and members of the church, which continue to be cherished. Relationships of *friendship* may continue but the *pastoral* relationship does not.

If you wish you may contact any of the council with your questions or concerns or for clarification of this request.

Sincerely,

Church Council, (...) Lutheran Church

APPENDIX F – SERVICE OF FAREWELL AND GODSPEED

(taken from the “Occasional Service Book”) *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

FAREWELL AND GODSPEED

Farewell and Godspeed is an affirmation of the corporate nature of the baptismal faith, for use when people leave a congregation. It may be adapted for use when people leave a field of service in another organization or institution.

When set within Holy Communion or the Service of the Word, this order is used following the prayers of intercession or before the blessing.

A representative of the congregation/council chairperson comes forward with those who are leaving the congregation and addresses the assembly.

Name/s, as you leave our congregation, we wish to bid you farewell.

One of the following or another appropriate scripture passage may be read.

A reading from Exodus: The LORD said, "I am going to send an angel in front of you, to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared." (Exodus 23:20)

or

A reading from Isaiah: Thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. (Isaiah 43:1-3)

or

A reading from John: Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Brief comments about those who are leaving and their life in the congregation may follow.

The representative of the congregation/council chairperson continues with these words, or with similar words appropriate to the person/s and the circumstances.

[In holy baptism our Lord Jesus Christ received you and made you members of his church.] When you came to this congregation we rejoiced to welcome you into the mission we share as the people of God. In this community you have come to know and to share in God's loving purpose for you and for all creation. God has blessed you in this community and God has blessed us through you.

The representative of the congregation/council chairperson may continue, as appropriate.

We encourage you to continue to receive and share God's gifts in name of new congregation or location, united with us in the body of Christ and the mission we share.

One of the following or another appropriate prayer is said.

Let us pray.

**Eternal God, we thank you for name/s
and for the time we have shared with them.**

**As they have been a blessing to us,
so now send them forth to be a blessing to others;
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

Amen.

or

Let us pray.

**Gracious God,
we thank you for the work and witness of your servant/s name/s,
who have enriched this congregation
and shared their gifts with their colleagues/friends/family.**

Now bless and preserve them at this time of transition.

Day by day, guide them and give them what is needed,

friends to cheer their way,

and a clear vision of that to which you are now calling them.

By your Holy Spirit be present in their pilgrimage,

that they may travel with the one who is the way, the truth, and the life,

Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The service continues with the greeting of peace or with the blessing.

Notes on the Service

The first sentence in the address to those departing may be omitted if one or more persons among those departing are not baptized.

Departure from a community may occur in difficult circumstances, such as in connection with broken relationships. Pastoral assessment of the situation may suggest the use of other prayers or rites, such as individual or corporate confession and forgiveness, instead of or in addition to Farewell and Godspeed.

APPENDIX G – COUNCIL WORKSHEET FOR INTERIM MINISTRY

The congregation council may use this worksheet to determine items that should be included in the agreement with the interim rostered leaders. Please bear in mind that the interim ministry is not necessarily full time and some expectations for ministry will have to be met from within the lay membership of the congregation.

1. What do you understand to be the needs of your congregation at this time? _____

2. How do you see the interim rostered leaders helping meet these needs? _____

3. How much preaching do you expect the interim rostered leaders to do?

Sundays: Time _____ Liturgy _____

Special Sundays Time _____ Liturgy _____

Weekdays Time _____ Liturgy _____

4. Do you expect the interim rostered leaders to do any teaching?

Catechetics Time _____ Place _____

Bible Study Time _____ Place _____

First Communion Time _____ Place _____

Sunday School Time _____ Place _____

Other Time _____ Place _____

5. How would you like the interim rostered leaders to be involved with council meetings?

When and where do you meet? _____

6. What other meetings do you expect the interim rostered leaders to attend?

Committee(s) When and where? _____

Staff When and where? _____

Other? When and where? _____

7. Do you expect the interim rostered leaders to preside at baptisms? _____ Weddings? _____ Funerals? _____

8. Do you expect the interim rostered leaders to do counseling?

Baptismal _____ Crisis _____ Pre-Marital _____ Other _____(specify below)

9. What type of visitation do you expect the interim rostered leaders to make?

Home visits _____ Hospital visits _____ Nursing home visits _____

Other (Describe) _____

10. Do you expect the interim rostered leaders to administer home communions? _____

How often? _____ When? _____

In whose homes? _____

11. What other duties would you expect the interim rostered leaders to be responsible for? _____

12. Indicate people in the congregation (from #9 and #10) the interim rostered leaders should visit. _____

13. What are some concerns or issues that the interim rostered leaders will need to know about and address?

14. What are concerns or issues your synod office will need to address? _____

15. Other comments.

APPENDIX H – INTERIM MINISTER EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

The Interim Minister Employment Agreement is available on the ELCIC National website:

<http://elcic.ca/Leadership/EmploymentAgreementsandLettersofCall.cfm>

APPENDIX I - COMPENSATION GUIDELINES

The purpose of an Interim Rostered leader Ministry Contract is to clearly define duties, days and hours of service, mutual expectations, and compensation.

It is expected that the interim rostered leader and the congregational council chair will be the two main sources of contact for the synod office and the conference dean.

COMPENSATION GUIDELINES FOR FULL TIME OR REGULAR PART-TIME MINISTRY

Compensation shall be as per Synod Salary Guidelines for the current year, or appropriate percentage related to the percentage of full-time ministry, to which the parties are mutually agreed. Please check the Synod website for the most current compensation guidelines.

COMPENSATION GUIDELINES FOR LIMITED INTERIM PASTORAL MINISTRY

The guidelines for remuneration are set yearly and are available from the Synod office or on the website:

<http://albertasynod.ca/administration/compensation-guidelines/>

1. Preside and preach on Sunday mornings
 - \$175.00 for one service
 - \$75.00 for an additional service
 - \$150.00 for a second service in a different language
2. \$90.00 for additional worship services other than Sunday mornings
3. If a rostered leader is asked by the parish to be available for various weekday activities (teaching, visitation, calling, meetings and the like) the sum of \$180.00/day is fair remuneration, based on an 8 hour day. If Sunday is designated as the day for the ministry, the sum of \$50.00 should be in addition to presiding and preaching for worship. The Rostered leader should be asked to be available in full- or half-day increments, not hourly.
4. Mileage for activities and services shall be reimbursed at the yearly rate set by the Synod guidelines.
5. An agreement may be made with a neighbouring rostered leader to supply emergency needs, if necessary.

COMPENSATION GUIDELINES FOR SUPPLY ROSTERED LEADERS

One of the services of the synod is to provide supply rostered leaders each Sunday for vacant congregations. The guidelines for remuneration are set yearly and are available from the Synod office or on the website: <http://albertasynod.ca/administration/compensation-guidelines/>

APPENDIX J - INTERIM MINISTRY COVENANT

SAMPLE #1

Council President:

Pastor/Diaconal Minister _____ on _____ (date) _____, your appointment by Bishop _____ to be our interim rostered leader began. We, the members of _____ Lutheran Church/Parish, _____, Alberta, now affirm the Bishop’s appointment for you to be our Interim Pastoral Shepherd.

The Interim Agreement is read (*optional*)

Rostered leader:

I, Pastor/Diaconal Minister _____, in the presence of this congregation commit myself to this new trust and responsibility, and promise to discharge my duties and responsibilities in harmony with Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and the Constitution of the ELCIC.

Council President: (*Congregation stands*)

People of God, will you receive this messenger of Jesus Christ, sent by God to serve God’s people with the Gospel of Hope and Salvation? Will you regard him/her as a servant of Christ and a steward of the mysteries of God? If so, answer “we will”.

Congregation: **We will.**

Council President:

Will you pray for him/her, help and honour him/her for his/her work’s sake, and in all things strive to live together in peace and unity of Christ? If so, answer “we will”.

Congregation: **We will.**

Council President:

The Office of Interim Rostered leader, and our partnership in the interim ministry is now mutually committed and begins in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. The peace of the Lord be with you all.

Congregation: **And also with you.**

Council President:

Please take this moment to share with one another a sign of peace.

The Exchange of Peace.

APPENDIX J - INTERIM MINISTRY COVENANT

SAMPLE #2

When set within the liturgy for Holy Communion, this order is used following the Sermon. The Congregation Council will designate a representative from the congregation to conduct the recognition rite.

The Congregation is seated.

Leader: (Reads John 20: 21-23; 1Timothy 4: 12-16)

Pastor/Diaconal Minister _____, in the presence of this congregation will you commit yourself to this new trust and responsibility, and promise to discharge your duties in harmony with the constitution of the Church?

Rostered leader: **I will, and I ask God to help me.**

Leader: **Will you love, serve, and pray for these people of God, nourishing them with the Word and Holy Sacraments, and lead them in the use of grace?**

Rostered leader: **I will, and I ask God to help me.**

Leader: **Will you lead this people of God in giving faithful witness to the world, and making known the love of God through loving service in this community?**

Rostered leader: **I will, and I ask God to help me.**

Leader: **Almighty God, who has given you the will to do these things, gives you the power of his Spirit so that you may perform them with strength and compassion.**

Congregation: **Amen.**

Leader: (addressing the congregation)

And you, people of God, will you receive this messenger of Jesus Christ, who continues the work of bringing the Gospel of Hope and Salvation? Will you regard him/her as a servant of Christ and a steward of the mysteries of God? If so, answer "we will".

Congregation: **We will.**

Leader: **Will you pray for him/her, help and honour him/her for his/her work's sake, and in all things strive to live together in peace and unity of Christ? If so, answer "we will".**

Congregation: **We will.**

Leader: (addressing the Rostered leader) **By your statements of commitment and the affirmation of this congregation, we welcome you as interim rostered leader of this congregation, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

The newly recognized interim rostered leader continues as presiding minister, leading the congregation in the Creed or prayers.

APPENDIX K - SERVICE OF INSTALLATION OF THE CALL COMMITTEE

(This order follows the creed; the congregation is seated)

Rostered leader:

The following persons, having been chosen to be the Call Committee, are asked to come forward as their names are read...

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

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

On behalf of your sisters and brothers in Christ, I now ask you: will you accept and faithfully carry out the duties of the Call Committee? If so, answer "we will".

(The committee faces the congregation, which stands)

Rostered leader: **People of God, I ask you, will you support these, your brothers and sisters in Christ, in their task and will you undergird their efforts with your prayers? If so, answer "we will".**

Congregation: **We will.**

Rostered leader: (to the Call Committee members)

I now declare you installed as the Call committee of this congregation. God bless you and your work together in his name.

Here follows the prayers and the peace.

APPENDIX L - INTERIM ROSTERED LEADER'S REPORT TO THE BISHOP AND STAFF

Name: _____ Date of Report _____

Congregation: _____ For month of: _____

Worship

1. What is your view of the atmosphere at worship services? _____

2. How is attendance? Is it remaining the same? Dropping? Increasing? _____

Support

1. Do you feel you are receiving support from the Congregational Council/others? _____

2. Is there anything the Synod Staff can do to assist you? _____

3. Satisfactions _____

4. Concerns _____

5. Are there any continuing concerns or comments regarding the previous rostered leader? _____

The Call/Call Process

How do you feel the call process is working in this congregation at this time? _____

Stewardship

How has the support of the budget been this month? _____

Please comment on anything you feel we should know. _____

APPENDIX M - DEVELOPING A CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE

Please notify the Synod office as soon as the congregation begins to consider seeking a new rostered leader or associate in ministry. Then begin to complete the Congregational Profile form (fillable) that is found online here: <http://albertasynod.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Congregational-Mission-Profile-fillable.pdf> following the instructions, below. The Congregational Profile will be of important use for the call committees, the Bishop and potential candidates. It is expected that the chairperson of the call committee will be the contact person with the Synod office.

INSTRUCTIONS AND GENERAL COMMENTS---

The completion of a Congregational Profile prior to the calling of a new rostered leader is helpful in at least three ways.

1. It provides the congregational Call Committee members with basic information and a description of leadership needs which will guide their work.
2. It assists the Bishop in recommending candidate(s) to be considered by the Call committee.
3. It provides a picture of the congregation for the candidates as they consider serving the congregation.

Therefore, please allow adequate time to thoroughly complete the Congregational Profile. You can find it on the Synod website under Administration/Documents.

The Congregational Profile is an important step in the process of securing new leadership. Be candid and honest in describing the congregation so that a prospective candidate reading the profile will have a clear picture of the congregation.

Part I - IV of the Profile (items 1 through 23, 26, and 27) can be answered by the Call Committee. You may wish to divide up the sections among the committee members to fill out and return to a Call Committee meeting to compile into the complete profile.

A portion of Part IV and all of Part V of the Profile (items 24-25, and 28) should be answered by the Call Committee *plus* a representative group from the congregation. This will ensure that the leadership needs identified in Part IV and V reflects the attitudes of the whole congregation. A synodical staff person can help if you need assistance in completing the profile.

PART I – CONGREGATIONAL INFORMATION

The following instructions will assist in completing Part I-IV (items 1 through 23, 26, and 27). The number of each of the instructions matches the number of the item on the Congregational Profile form.

1. Give the name, street address (or mailing address), location, phone number and congregational number (your treasurer uses it to submit monthly benevolence remittances to the Synod). Also include a fax number, website and email address if your congregation has them.
2. Provide contact information for the Chairperson of the Congregational Council.
3. Provide contact information for the Chairperson of the Call Committee. ***This person will be the contact person with/for the Synod office unless otherwise specified.***
4. List events or developments unique to your congregation.
5. List historical or internal issues in your congregation.
6. Review your current data on the ELCIC (National) website: www.elcic.ca
7. Review congregational constitution. Is it up to date?
8. Indicate the proximity that members live from the church and mode of transportation.

PART II – MINISTRY PRACTICES AND STRUCTURE

9. Describe the Present program and practices in worship. Some common responses might be:
 - a) Worship – two Sunday morning services, Holy communion every week, Monday evening worship in the summer;
 - b) Learning/Education – Sunday church School, Confirmation classes and camps, Council Study sessions, Adult forums;
10. Describe the Outreach ministries of the congregation. Some common responses might be:
 - a) Witness/Evangelism – In-reach ministry, parish visitation, outreach ministry, community callers, monthly lunch & concerts;
 - b) Service/Social Action – food bank, senior citizen’s transportation, community use of facilities;
11. List the staff of the congregation. Rostered refers to pastors/diaconal ministers who provide leadership ministry. Other salaried persons include those who serve in positions such as office administration, choir director, organist, etc. Indicate level of involvement (full or part-time) for each.
12. Describe the condition of your church property, specifically age and last renovation. Enter the insured value of your church buildings. If there are outstanding mortgages on church facilities, please indicate the balance of those amounts. If you are anticipating building during the next three to five years, indicate what the general plans are. It is helpful to know some things about the parsonage/housing if you provide housing. If you own other property than a parsonage and church building, describe the property (cemetery, recreation field, senior citizen facility, farm, etc.).
13. What is your congregation’s stewardship practice? How is stewardship encouraged, and gifts shared?
14. Attach a current budget and indicate the financial resources of your congregation. Indicate dollar amounts of reserves and savings that are currently held by the congregation. If your congregation has endowments or investments, indicate those in total dollar amounts. If these investments provide income for current or benevolence budget, indicate the percentage used for the annual budget. Indicate the percentage of the current budget (total of expenses plus benevolences and other gift) that is designated for staff salary, expenses, and benefits.
15. Describe your congregation participation in Synodical and National church activities. In what ways are congregational members involved in denominational activities in the synod or church wide ministries?
16. Describe your congregation’s partnership with the Synod and National church.

PART III – MISSION IN THE COMMUNITY

17. Describe the community your congregation is located in; size, urban, rural, suburban, etc.
18. List attributes of your community. Every community has distinctive characteristics. Perhaps it is the friendly attitude of the people toward one another, good schools, excellent cultural opportunities, etc. What are the distinctive characteristics which would attract a person to your community?
19. Describe the primary industries and types of businesses in your community. List the major employers and/or most influential businesses in the community.
20. Describe the trends in your community. Trends may be such things as housing for elderly, static population, growing population, water and sewage developments, LRT, educational or health care facilities, etc.
21. Describe ecumenical opportunities in your community and/or community ministries you now sponsor or support.

PART IV – WHERE IS GOD LEADING US?

22. Indicate the ministry and goal review your congregation has conducted in the last five years.
23. Indicate your current vision or mission statement.
24. List the top three missional priorities for your congregation. Here is your opportunity to state what your mission goals are for the next three years under new/expanded leadership.
25. What is your congregation excited about?

PART V – THE LEADER WE SEEK

26. Position title.
27. Expectations for this position.
28. Complete the Ministry Priorities and Skills checklist. This section provides opportunity for you to identify the leadership needs of the congregation for the future. Your leadership needs are closely related to your congregational needs and goals which have emerged in Part I, II, III and IV of the Congregational Profile. These leadership categories are the same ones that rostered leaders and associates in ministry respond to in the section Leadership Skills and Interests which is part of their Leadership Skills File. Later, when you review the file of prospective candidates, you will be able to compare the leadership needs you have identified with the leadership skills and interests of candidates.

All items on the Ministry Priorities and Skills list are important. However, all cannot be equal priority for your congregation at this time. Realistically, a new rostered leader or associate in ministry cannot have leadership skills and abilities in all areas.

Your congregation may wish to send out the checklist to all congregational members to complete at home and return to the church at a specified date. A sample letter is included at the end of this appendix. Another option is to gather a representative group of people from your congregation to meet and complete the checklist in one sitting. The following process may assist with this type of gathering.

Participants - Call Committee plus a group representative of the whole congregation. It is good to have a mix of genders, ages, ethnicity, and marital status to get a broad picture of the congregation's view of the ministry priorities and skills.

Time Required - Approximately two hours.

Materials Needed - Each participant will need a copy of 28. Ministry Priorities and Skills. In addition, you will need at least one copy for a tally and one official copy which you will send to the synodical office. Please photocopy additional copies if needed. The leader may also want to use a chalkboard or newsprint to total participants' individual responses.

What To Do

1. Establish a time and place when the group will meet to work on Part IV – Where is God Leading Us?
2. Briefly review the information gathered in the Congregational Profile, Part I - IV. The group may have additional suggestions and information.
3. Distribute to each participant a copy of 28. Ministry Priorities and Skills.
4. Explain that each category is important but participants are asked to select a low, middle, or top rating in light of your congregational needs for the future regarding this staff position. There are thirty categories. Ask each person to select, by checking the appropriate line, ten leadership needs

that have lowest priority. Then select the top ten leadership needs. That should leave ten leadership needs in the middle category.

5. Allow ten to fifteen minutes for individuals working on their own to respond to the thirty selections.
6. When all have finished, compile the data by having each participant share his/her rating for each category. For example, if twenty persons participate, the total tally for “Leader of Worship” category could look something like this:

Top 14 Middle 4 Bottom 2

7. After totals for all thirty categories are compiled, take time to talk about the findings. Merely adding up the votes will not always provide a complete profile.
8. The concluding step is to identify the **four** most important leadership needs relative to this staff position in light of the Congregation Information from Part I - IV and the Ministry Priorities and Skills identified in Part V. Again, allow time for every person to share his/her thinking while the other participants actively listen. Everyone does not have to agree, but each person should have opportunity to contribute. Allowing time for discussion now can avoid misunderstandings and disagreements in the future. Your conclusions about leadership needs will provide the Call Committee with information to be used in interviewing candidates.

Your Congregational Profile is now completed. Congratulations! You now have a picture of your congregation for use by the Call Committee, your synodical Bishop, and prospective candidates. Your congregation may also like to see the picture of itself that you have developed. The Profile could be distributed prior to a Sunday worship service or mailed in the newsletter.

29. Compensation and professional expense reimbursement. List the range of salary and other benefits your congregation will provide for the position. Compensation guidelines are available from the Synod office or on the website. <http://albertasynod.ca/administration/compensation-guidelines/>
In addition, list two references *from outside your congregation*, who would be willing to share further insights and impressions of your congregation.

Sample Letter to Congregational Members

Re: Congregational Profile – Part V Ministry Priorities and Skills

Dear Confirmed members,

Enclosed with this letter is a survey form for rating the skills and interests you wish to see in our next rostered leader.

We are asking every confirmed member of our church to complete and return the survey to the church office within 10 days.

Please carefully follow these instructions:

- 1) Select your **10 MOST** important priorities. Indicate them by checking off the 'Top' column beside the priority statement.
- 2) Select your **10 LEAST** important priorities. Indicate them by checking off the 'Bottom' column beside the priority statement.
- 3) You should have 10 mid-priorities left. Indicate them by checking off the 'Middle' column beside the priority statement.

We will compile the results from all the surveys received and report them to you as soon as possible. The call committee will use this information to aid in their search for a rostered leader. Forms received after this ten day period will not be able to be a part of this survey.

Sincerely,
Congregational Council Chairperson or
Call Committee Chairperson

APPENDIX N - NOMINATIONS FORM

Nominations for Pastoral Candidates

The Call Committee would welcome your suggestions of possible candidates for our next rostered leader. Please be aware that while the committee will take all nominations seriously, it can only talk with candidates cleared by the bishop. Candidates from other synods must be cleared by their own bishops.

I would like the call committee to consider this person for our next rostered leader:

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Synod _____

Reason for Recommending _____

Your Name _____

Phone Number _____

Congregation: _____ City/Town: _____

APPENDIX O - COMPARISON OF CANDIDATES MINISTRY REQUIREMENTS

Congregation: _____ Address: _____

Members of the Call Committee _____

Name of the Candidate _____

Use one sheet per candidate to minimize comparing them.

Assess each candidate using the following scale:

- 1 - Knowledge and/or skills level well **below** profile requirements.
- 2 - Knowledge and/or skills level **meet minimum** profile requirements..
- 3 - Knowledge and/or skills level **meet all** profile requirements.
- 4 - Knowledge and/or skills level **unusually extensive and useful** in fulfilling ministry profile requirements
- 5 - Knowledge and/or skills level **exceed** position requirements.

LIST OF PROFILE REQUIREMENTS

(from 28. Ministry Priorities and Skills)

RANKING

(Rank 1-5 for each category)

1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____
9. _____	_____

TOTALS: Add up number to give you an overall picture. Do NOT automatically choose the person with the highest ranking since this is only a preliminary means of matching candidate’s strengths against congregational needs. Many other factors should be taken into account in choosing a rostered leader that best befits the identified needs of your congregation. Use it to determine what each candidate’s strengths are relative to your needs. This does not preclude the need for prayerful consideration of all factors involved, trusting that God will guide and oversee the whole process.

Summary Statement: As a committee, describe in several sentences, your assessment of the candidate. Review the statement with the values about objectivity in mind. If other values are influencing you, try to state as clearly as possible what those are. This will help clarify why a particular candidate should be chosen. Values other than what we have discussed may enter in. We need only do our best to see their presence and ask the question of appropriateness and fairness.

APPENDIX P - INTERVIEW FEEDBACK "CONFIDENTIAL"

Name of Candidate: _____

Congregation/City: _____

Date name was presented to Call Committee _____

Date(s) of interview: _____

In the committee's opinion, what were the gifts the candidate has to offer your congregation? _____

In the committee's opinion, what gifts for pastoral ministry does your congregation need that this candidate does not have? _____

What is the committee's decision regarding his/her candidacy? _____

If the candidate is to be dropped from consideration, the following are your responsibility:

- a. inform the candidate: date informed _____
- b. cover the candidate's expenses for the interview

Date: _____

APPENDIX Q - SAMPLE LETTERS FOR A CALL COMMITTEE

Dear Pastor/Diaconal Minister _____ ,

On behalf of the call committee, I want to thank you [and _____(spouse's name)] for visiting with us as a beginning step toward consideration of a call to _____Church/Parish. We were pleased with the openness and depth of our conversation. We felt that the evening/afternoon was most productive.

If it is agreeable with you, we would like to leave your name on our call list with the understanding that we are still in the process of deciding on one primary candidate before we make our recommendation to the council. When we arrive at that point, we will be back in touch with you.

Please feel free to call me at any time, if you have question or concerns. Again, thank you for spending time with us.

Cordially,
_____ Call Committee Chair
c.c. Bishop

Dear _____ ,

On behalf of the call committee, I want to thank you [and _____, (spouse's name)] for visiting with us as a first step toward consideration of a call at _____Church/Parish.

We appreciated your responses to our questions and were glad that you shared your concerns with us.

After considering the challenges and needs of _____ congregation/parish in light of your strengths and interests, we feel that it would be best to continue our search for a rostered leader in other directions.

Again, we thank you for your time and interest. Our prayers are with you and your ministry.

Cordially,
_____ Call Committee Chair
c.c. Bishop

APPENDIX R - CALL COMMITTEE SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR A CANDIDATE

1. Tell us about your faith.
2. Tell us why you chose to become a rostered leader.
3. Describe your preaching style. What things do you emphasize in your preaching?
4. What is your concept of Stewardship? Evangelism? Social Ministry?
5. How do you view the role of church committees?
6. How do you feel about pastoral visiting? Crisis visiting?
7. What are your feelings about inclusivity as it refers to the congregation council? How about in the congregation?
8. What are your thoughts on Learning Ministry?
9. How would you help us involve our young people in the church activities?
10. What do you think about fund-raising activities?
11. What do you expect from the congregation council?
12. (optional) Do you see the role of your spouse in the congregation as being the same as other lay members or different?
13. What do you expect from laypeople? How can the laity help in our ministry?
14. What do you feel are the major emphases of your ministry? Your top 5 skills?
15. What things do you not like to do?
16. Tell us how you feel about confirmation ministry?
17. Are you interested in adult education? How about during the week?
18. Tell us about your worship style. Are you interested in experimenting with different services?
19. How do you see your role in relation to the congregation council?
20. What is your thought on communion practices? (frequency, type, age of first communion, home communions, etc.)
21. How do you feel a rostered leader can best present a good image for the church in the community?
22. What have been your most satisfying achievements in the ministry during the last year?
23. Do you see the rostered leader as the leader and authority person? One to involve others in decisions and work? Or as preacher, worship leader and visitor?

APPENDIX S - CANDIDATE SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR THE CALL COMMITTEE

1. Why am I of particular interest to you?
2. What has been the most significant event in the life of this congregation since you have been a member?
(This helps you discover what is significant to them; it also helps you see what the congregation considers significant.)
3. Aside from the upheaval of looking for a new rostered leader, what has been the most upsetting event in the life of this congregation?
4. In your opinion, what areas of concern need to be addressed by this congregation?
5. What kinds of things did your former rostered leader do particularly well?
6. What were the circumstances surrounding your former rostered leader's departure? (If the former rostered leader died in office, you may want to rephrase this question being sensitive to their need to mourn his/her departure.)
7. In what areas do you feel your congregational ministry needs a particular expertise?
8. What formal and informal methods of support have you used in the past to help your rostered leader become a better minister?
9. What are the congregation members' expectations of the rostered leader's spouse?
10. How should your rostered leader spend his/her time?
11. In the course of a week, how much time should be spent in prayer?
 - a. Personal study?
 - b. Sermon preparation?
 - c. Administration?
 - d. Individual and family counseling?
 - e. Visiting?
 - f. With his/her family?
 - g. Synodical/National church involvement?
 - h. Community and ecumenical activities?
12. What organizations in the congregation are the most active and/or successful?
13. Beyond calling a rostered leader, what is the highest congregational priority for the next twelve months?
14. What goals have you established for the future? What methods can be used to achieve those goals?
15. What plans have you made for the expansion of staff or building?
16. How stable is this congregation financially?
17. What programs have you planned to implement in the next ten years?
18. What areas of your congregational ministry needs particular support/strengthening?

APPENDIX T – CALL DOCUMENTS

LETTER OF CALL

The Letter of Call Document is available on the ELCIC National website:

<http://elcic.ca/Leadership/EmploymentAgreementsandLettersofCall.cfm>

EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENTS

Employment Agreement and Guide to Employment Agreements are available on the ELCIC National website:

<http://elcic.ca/Leadership/EmploymentAgreementsandLettersofCall.cfm>

COMPENSATION GUIDELINES FOR SYNOD OF ALBERTA AND THE TERRITORIES

SYNOD OF ALBERTA AND THE TERRITORIES COMPENSATION GUIDELINES FOR ROSTERED LEADERS

MINIMUM GUIDELINES are provided each year to assist congregations in planning the remuneration for rostered leaders (pastors and diaconal ministers). It should be noted that these are minimum expectations and that individual circumstances, experience and work load of the individual should be considered and higher amounts paid where necessary. Where it is impossible for the congregation to pay a minimum salary according to the scale, other options for compensating the individual should be considered, for example, extra holiday time, or availability for part-time employment outside the parish.

The level of remuneration paid to an individual in today's society is arrived at in a variety of ways. In private enterprise including the individual farmer, remuneration results from profits gained from the selling of goods and services. In the labour movement and in some professions, collective agreements, usually negotiated by professional negotiators, are binding on both parties. In other areas, an individual may negotiate a contract based on the perceived value of that individual's services. In very few areas today does an individual rely solely on the good will of a constituency for remuneration. The pastor, diaconal minister and other church staff are among these few.

However, rostered leaders should be paid sufficiently so that they can attend to their ministry without concern for their families' material welfare. As well, it is fair that for congregations within a synod there be established a comparable salary and benefits package.

Compensation guidelines are updated annually. The salary scales need to reflect that our rostered leaders are well-educated professionals, many with at least seven or more years in post-secondary

institutions. It is reasonable that salary levels be comparable with other professions with similar educational experience, and with those in other Synods of the ELCIC and other denominations.

Annual increments in salary reflect the understanding that an individual grows in confidence, skill acquisition and skill application with experience in a call. The increases in the compensation guidelines are meant to reflect the increased service potential of the individual with more parish experience. After reaching the maximum years of service on the guidelines, salary increases should be based on economic conditions (e.g., an increment for cost of living increases) and the satisfaction of the parish.

Parishes want to have pastors and diaconal ministers who effectively serve, lead and minister to the needs of the community and are adequately compensated for their services. Concerns about salaries, allowances and benefits need to be viewed with regard to the very special nature of the service that a rostered minister is called to provide. It is very important that local grievances concerning a pastor's/diaconal minister's service be addressed locally, and not through general reductions in the guidelines. The compensation guidelines help us to bring order to the Synod so that God's people can grow and the Gospel can be shared.

The current compensation guidelines can be found on the Synod website at <http://albertasynod.ca/administration/compensation-guidelines/>
Or by calling the Synod office.

APPENDIX U - PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES FOR A CALL MEETING

- Congregational call meetings are often held immediately after a worship service. If the meeting is held at a time other than after a worship service, items marked with an asterisk (*) may be included to remind the people that it is in the context of worship and prayer that the decision to call a rostered leader is made.
- The Bishop or the Bishop's representative shall meet with the congregational chairperson before the meeting begins to determine that:
 - a. The meeting has been convened in accordance with the constitutional requirements for giving advance notice and stating the express purpose of the meeting.
 - b. There is a quorum of voting members present.
 - c. The call committee's recommendation to the congregation to call a rostered leader was passed by at least a 2/3 majority vote.

SUGGESTED AGENDA

1. The congregational chairperson shall call the meeting to order by announcing the purpose of the meeting.
2. The chair shall introduce the Bishop/Bishop's Representative, who shall thereafter conduct the meeting.
3. The Bishop/Bishop's Representative shall lead the congregation in the invocation.
 - * Hymn 284 (LBW) or other suitable hymn *may* be sung.
 - * Scripture lessons *may* be read (e.g. LBW Occasional Services, p. 229).
John 20:21-23; Matt. 28:18-20; I Tim. 4:12-16
4. The Bishop/Bishop's Representative shall lead in prayer (Ministers of the Word, LBW p. 46 or other).
5. The Bishop/Bishop's Representative shall ask the call committee chairperson (or designate) to:
 - a. Provide biographical information about the candidate (read a prepared curriculum vitae or share freely from interview).
 - b. Read the Letter of Call and the Memorandum of Compensation. (Changes may be made to the Letter of Call or the Memorandum of Compensation by a proper motion to amend, seconded, duly recorded, and approved by a majority vote of the assembly.)
 - c. Move that the candidate be called in accordance with these documents.
6. The Bishop/Bishop's Representative shall ask for a seconder.
7. The Bishop/Bishop's Representative shall invite questions from the floor for response by the call committee chair/designate.

8. The Bishop/Bishop's Representative shall explain the voting procedures:
 - a. Voting shall be by secret ballot, and shall require at least a 2/3 majority vote of those present in order to issue a valid call.
 - b. In a multiple point parish, a 2/3 majority vote is required in each congregation.
 - c. Voting shall include the Letter of Call and the Memorandum of Compensation.
9. The Bishop/Bishop's Representative shall pray (Election of a Pastor LBW p. 46).
10. Ballots shall be distributed and a vote taken.
11. Counters shall collect and count the ballots (one or more hymns may be sung during this process, e.g., LBW 286).
12. The Bishop/Bishop's Representative shall announce the result of the ballot:
 - a. If the congregation approves issuing a call: Prayer is offered for the candidate who will be considering the call and for the congregation as they await the decision.
 - b. If the congregation does not approve issuing a call: Prayer is offered for the candidate who was willing to be considered, for the call committee as they return to their work, and for the congregation and interim rostered leader as they re-enter the call process.
13. The Bishop/Bishop's Representative shall call for a motion to destroy the ballots.
14. The meeting is returned to the congregational chair who shall call for a motion to adjourn.
15. The Bishop/Bishop's Representative shall close by blessing the congregation (Benediction, doxology, or other suitable closing may be offered).
 - Following the meeting, the persons entrusted by the congregation with signing authority shall sign both the Letter of Call and the Memorandum of Compensation, and initial any changes to them as mandated by the congregational meeting. If the vote is negative, the materials shall be returned to the Synod Office with advice to the bishop if he or she is not present. The bishop shall arrange with the call committee chairperson to present names of other candidates for consideration.
 - The congregational chairperson shall contact the candidate by phone to convey the results of the vote.
 - The Bishop/Bishop's Representative shall fill out the Certification of Call Procedure, and, if applicable, courier or deliver it with the Letter of Call and Memorandum of Compensation to the Synod Office, where the Seal of the Synod and the signature of the bishop shall be added. The materials shall thereafter be sent by courier to the candidate.

CERTIFICATION OF CALL PROCEDURE – SAMPLE DOCUMENT



To: _____, Bishop`s Representative
 RE: The Call of Rev./Diaconal Minister
 to _____

CERTIFICATION OF CALL PROCEDURE

The Undersigned certifies to the Bishop that these procedures were properly followed in issuing the attached Letter of Call:

- _____ The Call Committee voted to recommend the pastor to the congregation by at least a 2/3 majority.
- _____ The Call Meeting of the congregation was convened in accordance with the constitution requirements for such a meeting, relative to advance notice and purpose of the meeting.
- _____ There was a sign in sheet(s) for voting members to sign before the meeting commences.
- _____ There were an equal *or lesser* number of ballots corresponding to number of voting members present.
- _____ There was a quorum of voting members at the Call Meeting.
- _____ Opportunity for full discussion was made available to voting members in attendance.
- _____ The Letter of Call, together with the Memorandum of Compensation, was extended by at least a clear 2/3 majority of votes cast by members present at the Call Meeting.
- _____ Changes, if any, to the written-in portions were passed by a majority of those present and initialed by officers.

Respectfully submitted,

_____ Date: _____

(Please note any comments you may have on the back of the sheet.)

Please return this form, along with the Letter of Call and the Memorandum of Compensation, both duly signed, for the Bishop to countersign, seal, and forward to the Pastor.

APPENDIX V - SIX-NINE MONTH MINISTRY REVIEW

Date: _____ Rostered leader _____

Congregation _____

Reflections on our ministry

1. A time of joy was _____

2. The most difficult aspect of the start-up time has been _____

3. A specific instance in which the council supported the rostered leader was _____

4. A time when the council could have been more supportive of the rostered leader _____

5. A time when the rostered leader could have provided stronger support for the council or a committee.

Checking the vital signs

1. How are we doing in:
a) Worship attendance _____

b) Programs _____

c) Care of members _____

2. How is our financial response looking? _____

3. What is the congregational climate? _____

Looking ahead to next year

1. Are there changes or adjustments that need to be made? What are they? Who is responsible for making them? _____

2. Two specific steps we can take to strengthen our mutual ministry as rostered leader/council:

1. _____

2. _____

(This review is to be completed by the council and/or Staff Support Committee and may be forwarded to the bishop's office.)

APPENDIX W - EVALUATION OF THE CALL PROCESS

To be completed by the Call Committee Chairperson:

1. I appreciated most.... _____

2. I least liked.... _____

3. Next time I would like to.... _____

4. I found the Call Process Manual.... _____

5. I recommend the following specific changes to the Call Process Manual.... _____

6. The support I received from the Synod Office was _____

7. Other comments.... _____

APPENDIX X - CALL MEETINGS - CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERSHIP SIGN IN SHEET

A Call Meeting of the congregation needs to be convened in accordance with the constitution requirements for such a meeting, relative to advance notice and purpose of the meeting.

It is advisable to have a list of voting members names prepared before the meeting to check off as people enter the assembly.

On the next pages you will find sign-in sheets for voting members to sign as they arrive for the meeting. Please have these available so members can clearly print their names and sign before the meeting continues. They must then stay for the meeting and cast a vote. Proxy votes are disallowed. The number of ballots cast must equal the number of members signed up as attending the meeting.

CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERSHIP SIGN-IN SHEET

CONGREGATION: _____

LOCATION: _____

DATE: _____

Member's Name (please print)

Member's Signature

1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____
11.	_____	_____
12.	_____	_____

Member's Name (please print)

Member's Signature

13.	_____	_____
14.	_____	_____
15.	_____	_____
16.	_____	_____
17.	_____	_____
18.	_____	_____
19.	_____	_____
20.	_____	_____
21.	_____	_____
22.	_____	_____
23.	_____	_____
24.	_____	_____
25.	_____	_____
26.	_____	_____
27.	_____	_____
28.	_____	_____
29.	_____	_____
30.	_____	_____
31.	_____	_____
32.	_____	_____
33.	_____	_____
34.	_____	_____

page ____ of ____

Member's Name (please print)	Member's Signature
35. _____	_____
36. _____	_____
37. _____	_____
38. _____	_____
39. _____	_____
40. _____	_____
41. _____	_____
42. _____	_____
43. _____	_____
44. _____	_____
45. _____	_____
46. _____	_____
47. _____	_____
48. _____	_____
49. _____	_____
50. _____	_____
51. _____	_____
52. _____	_____
53. _____	_____
54. _____	_____
55. _____	_____

page ____ of ____

APPENDIX Y - DEVOTIONS FOR CALL COMMITTEES

FIVE BRIEF DEVOTIONS FOR CONGREGATIONS IN CALL PROCESS

By the Rev. Ronald Olson, Director of Admissions, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota

† † † † †

I. In Calling a Rostered leader, We Consider Our Own Calling

*Writing to the church in Corinth, the Apostle Paul encouraged believers there to consider their own call. As we begin our work as a congregation in the call process, we may consider the call we all have from God by exploring a few of the following scriptures: **Acts 2:39, Ephesians 4:4-6, Colossians 3:15, 1 Timothy 6:12, 1 Peter 3:9, and 1 John 3:1***

What a calling – to hope, peace, eternal life! In these verses, all of us are called children of God. Clearly, this is on account of God's power and wisdom, not our own.

This powerful call is the one that comes to all believers through God's Word in Holy Baptism. That is why Martin Luther was bold to insist that "the ministry of the Word belongs to all." And again, "There is no other Word of God than that which is given all Christians to proclaim." (from Luther's *Concerning the Ministry*, 1523) Just as all Christians share the promise, so too do we share the task of proclamation. Most of us take up the task in the ministry of daily life. Others we ask to do so publicly for the community so faith can be created and sustained in us. So we see that in the economy of God's grace the ministry of those called and ordained follows from the call which has come to all who believe.

How do we sense God's call most clearly? In which aspect of life do we find God's Word (the promise, the hope, the peace) being "proclaimed" in the strongest way? The Bible even speaks of us as "holy partners in a heavenly calling." (Hebrews 3:1) What do you think that might mean for daily living?

Gracious calling God, call on us with your grace again and again. Renew us daily in the peace, hope, and eternal life we have been promised and which we have been called to proclaim. As we work to call a rostered leader to our congregation, may we count on the prayers of all members of this community of faith to uphold us, just as we trust your Spirit to guide us. We remember, God, you are the One who called us first. Amen.

† † † † †

II. In Calling a Rostered leader, We Consider God's Gifts

God's gracious giving extends to the church, too. God has not been content to let the church fend for itself since Pentecost. On the contrary, the Holy Spirit still enlivens the community of faith. As Bishop April Ulring Larson has said, "What God is interested in is empowering the body of Christ." God has raised up leaders, gifted ministers and rostered leaders for the church in all times and places. When the church has prayed, "Save and defend your whole Church, purchased with the precious blood of Christ. Give it rostered leaders and ministers filled with your Spirit, and strengthen it through the Word and the holy sacraments," God has answered.

Listen to this wonderful scripture: II Peter 1:3-11. Would any of us, either as individual believers or as members together of a congregation, have any reason to question the truth of those verses? In fact, how have the promises offered there been answered and proved true in your experiences of the life of faith? In the life of our congregation?

We overhear the prayer that scripture offers up for us in Ephesians 3:14-21. The One who has called us is also at work in us doing far more than we can ask or imagine. That's an amazing thought!

As we join in singing or saying LBW 543, "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty," focus on verse two and ask, "What does that verse mean, promise, and say to us about God's watch over us?" Can we claim this hymn's great promise even in calling a new rostered leader?

Luther's Small Catechism offers his explanation of the third and fourth petitions of the Lord's Prayer saying: "God's will is done when he strengthens our faith and keeps us firm in his Word as long as we live."

And, "Daily bread includes everything needed for this life, such as food and clothing, home and property, work and income, a devoted family, an orderly community, good government, favorable weather, peace and health, a good name, and true friends and neighbors."

We daily trust God's good gifts for our faith and life. Such confidence also belongs to the faith and life of the whole church.

***Gracious giving God,** give us your help again, just as you have always done. Remind us of your care. Let there be gratitude in our congregation, for all that is needful has been sent and ordained for us already. As we work to call a new rostered leader to our congregation, may we be strengthened for this task with the thought that your providing reaches to every need of your church. This call committee and community of believers are your church, too. Amen.*

† † † † †

III. In Calling a Rostered leader, We Consider Congregation and Community Needs

*The Apostle Paul provides a wonderful "snapshot" of life in a Christian community in his first letter to the Thessalonian church: **1 Thessalonians 5:12-24***

This letter of Paul, one of the earliest Christian writings, already shows Paul's love of lists. Here he checks off some of the characteristics of faithful community life –

- respect for those who labor among us;
- peace among ourselves;
- help for the weak;
- patience with all;
- always seeking to do good to one another and to all;
- prayer without ceasing;
- no quenching of the Spirit;
- holding fast to what is good.

That is a lot to be and do in the freedom of the gospel. That is a tall order for a mission congregation. Could this be the first "Congregational Profile"? Our congregation today is also the location of worship, care and mission, and full of needs in order to give ourselves faithfully to this gospel work. Let's name some of these community needs.

Is calling a new rostered leader more a matter of finding someone to meet those needs (do all those things), or of calling one to lead the congregation to do what needs to be done? Are we, as members of our congregation, only objects of ministry, or are we also subjects/agents of ministry? When we

consider congregational “needs,” scripture points us right away to the Christian mission that needs doing in God's world, and the gospel work in which we share responsibility. Fortunately, in our need, there are leaders to help us. And we are in the process of calling one of them into our midst.

***Gracious sanctifying God,** thank you for drawing us ever anew into the ministry of the Word. In the community of faith, we are empowered for witness and service even as we are ministered to with forgiveness, reconciliation, and healing. As we work to call a new rostered leader to our congregation, show us our neediness – what we need and what needs doing for our life together in Christ. Amen.*

† † † † †

IV. In Calling a Rostered leader, We Consider Ministry Gifts

If the Bible is to be believed, then God has only “gifted” children. We have this declaration from Ephesians 4:7, 11-16. Gifts galore!

God has given ministry gifts to the people of God, to the church, for the benefit of all. We know, of course, that we do not all have all the gifts. And, some having just the gifts they have been given are also called into the church's public ministry, into the ministry of Word and Sacrament. The Apostle Paul liked the image of the body, one body with many parts all working together – I Corinthians 12:27-30.

We may all sense that we possess certain “gifts for ministry.” It is no accident that some members end up teaching Sunday School year after year – we are not all up to that important work. Some are very comfortable in front of others, leading worship, teaching Bible studies and the like – others are not. We may also sense that our whole congregation, the community taken as one, is gifted, too, in a special position or especially equipped for a particular ministry or mission.

Think of some of the special gifts our former rostered leaders had. Which ones did they have in common? What were their unique gifts for ministry, for leadership in the church? What gifts are going to be most important to our congregation in the years ahead? Most likely, there is no single gift that will identify our new rostered leader to us. Nor is there only one who possesses the gifts we seek.

There are many gifted leaders in the church, thank God. So the difficulty of the task at hand is not so much that there are no good candidates or that there is only one rostered leader who could lead us in mission. Oftentimes, part of the hard work of a call committee is leaving room for the Holy Spirit in the discernment of the many gifts in the candidates God may send. Our task is never simply a matter of “hiring” someone, even the “best” someone we can find, but of allowing God's Spirit to work in and through us to build up the church in calling a new rostered leader. And that can happen, indeed, because God is at work with us in all of this.

***Gracious gifting God,** we are reminded of your gifts in and for all the children of the church. Call on our gifts now, use us, in service of your whole church. As we work to call a new rostered leader to our congregation, may your Holy Spirit lead us to discern the gifts we seek and see those gifts clearly in the candidates you are sending to us. In our communications, interviews and meetings with them, may we find ourselves once again who we surely are in Christ Jesus, stewards of your many gifts. Amen.*

† † † † †

V. In Calling a Rostered leader, We Consider the Changing Context/New Opportunities and Challenges

Listen to Colossians 3:12-17. We are being changed. That is what the Spirit of Christ is doing with us.

There is a marvelous new-life prayer in the “Evening Prayer/Vespers” of the LBW:

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

Amen.

We are not the same congregation we were last year, or ten years ago. Times have changed, things have changed, we have changed since last calling a rostered leader. What do those changes mean for the calling of a new one? What is different now? How has our community felt the changes? Changing demographics, aging populations, new immigrants, all these factors make for renewal in mission and ministry, too, in service and witness for the community of faith. Let’s take some time to reflect yet again on these new opportunities and challenges as a committee.

Are we more open as a congregation to see the gifts of a candidate we may not have considered so seriously before? Many congregations have found that to be true, for example, in looking at single candidates, female and older candidates. Pastor Eleanor Hunsberger states the matter boldly, “When God calls you to ministry as a person of color, a person who is physically challenged, a person who is different, who does not fit the Lutheran mold of this is what a rostered leader looks like...somehow the Holy Spirit removes the barriers and people are able to open up to receive such people.” She goes on to say, “We’re helping God, we’re working with the Holy Spirit in this process.” We refresh ourselves in these words from scripture about our life in the Spirit: Romans 8:26-30. We are so called according to God’s purpose. The times may be changing, but we are standing on that solid promise.

Gracious accompanying God, the One in whom we live and move and have our being, give us a vision of the times of our lives, the new situations in which we live out our faith in Jesus. May we ask anew what it means to be the Church in our time, our place. And as we work to call a new rostered leader to our congregation, may we welcome according to your Spirit the one you are sending to us to lead us into the new days ahead. Amen.