

Checklist for Congregational Leaders During the Call Process



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

(See www.swmnelca.org; at right, select Engaging Leaders/Call Process)

Step 1 – The Current Pastor Resigns

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

Step 2 – Beginning the Interim

- Pray, especially for the congregation and its leaders, the synod staff who will assist the congregation during the interim, and those who provide interim pastoral ministry
- Pastoral ministry transition team identified
- Interim pastoral leadership identified
- Completed interim letter of agreement and effective start date returned to synod office (white)**
- Information package for interim pastor complete (goldenrod)
- Agreement for use of 148A compliance administrator completed and returned to synod office (tan)**
- Time line posted in church (optional)

Step 3 – Completing the Ministry Site Profile (MSP)

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

Step 4 – Forming the Call Committee

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



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

- _____ Pray, especially for your call committee, the synod staff, candidates who are recommended to your congregation, and those who provide interim pastoral ministry to your congregation
- _____ Call committee meets with synod staff to receive candidate mobility information
- _____ Definition of Compensation form and instructions regarding Letter of Call received from synod office
- _____ Information packets assembled for candidates
- _____ Candidates for personal interview selected and invited
- _____ **Synod office notified of interview dates (§148A)**
- _____ Practice interview conducted (optional)
- _____ Plans made for personal interview with candidates (travel, housing, and other arrangements)
- _____ **Interviews completed and reports of interview submitted to synod office**
- _____ Interviewees thanked in writing and reimbursed for expenses
- _____ Candidates no longer considered are notified and thanked
- _____ **Synod office notified regarding candidates no longer considered**
- _____ Call committee selects candidate to recommend to council
- _____ Candidates notified regarding decision about recommendation
- _____ Call committee makes recommendation to council

Step 6 – Extending the Call

- _____ Pray, especially for the candidate recommended to your congregation and all members of the congregation, that they will be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit in their decision-making
- _____ Congregational meeting set for vote on candidate
- _____ **Synod office notified of name of candidate and date of vote (§148A and Letter of Call)**
- _____ Presentation is prepared about recommended candidate
- _____ Congregational meeting (2/3 majority vote required to extend call)
- _____ **Candidate and synod staff notified of outcome of vote**
- _____ **If vote is yes, completed call documents forwarded to synod office for bishop's signature**
- _____ Response to Letter of Call received (*candidate has 30 days*)
- _____ Farewell planned for interim pastor

Step 7 – Welcoming Your New Pastor

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