



More Thoughts Regarding the Interview Process

1. Interviews often have both formal and informal components. The informal conversations serve as “ice breakers” before the more formal interview. For example, an interview might begin with a tour of the community (hosted by one or two members of the call committee) followed by a meal with the entire call committee. The more structured conversation might then follow. Allowing an hour for the tour, an hour for the meal, and two hours for the formal interview, many congregations schedule at least a four-hour block of time for this initial meeting.
2. Call committees may find it helpful to watch a candidate lead worship and preach. This can be done in one of three ways. First, it is possible to arrange a “site visit” to a candidate’s congregation on a Sunday morning. If this is done, we suggest sending only a couple members to worship in order to be as discrete as possible. (Don’t take the entire committee and arrive in the church bus!) It is also important to inform the candidate *in advance* about any congregational visit. Second, most call committees find it helpful to schedule a visit like this *after* the initial interview. Third, it is also possible to request a video tape or DVD of a candidate leading worship, an option which allows the entire call committee to view the candidate “in action”.
3. It is the call committee’s responsibility to contact the candidates on a regular basis about their status in the call process. Your candidates are all aware that they are involved in your call process; in fact, they have been reading your ministry site profile as you have been reading their rostered leader profiles. Consequently, they are awaiting word as to their status in your process. Regardless of your decisions concerning these candidates, out of courtesy and respect for the candidates, please keep in regular communication with them, especially at the point when it is clear that they are not going to be considered for call. (It is possible that the candidates are also being considered by other congregations, so it is important for them to know where they stand in your process.)
4. In addition to the candidates, please keep in constant communication with everyone involved (council, congregation, **SYNOD OFFICE**, candidates, each other) throughout the interview process. *For Minnesota Statute §604 compliance purposes, please contact the synod office when you have scheduled an interview.*
5. It is the congregation’s responsibility to reimburse candidates for any expenses incurred during the interview process. Please ask your candidates for their mileage figures, as well as any receipts for housing or meals, in order to reimburse them in a timely manner.
6. **Confidentiality is crucial throughout this stage of the call process.** While it is important to keep communication high at this point in general (see #3), the specific details concerning the candidates are for your eyes only. Consequently, if a parishioner would ask who the candidates are that the call committee is interviewing, you might say, “Thank you for asking and caring about the call process. To answer your question, we are interviewing several strong, healthy, faithful candidates.” If the parishioner persists in knowing details, please refer them to the synod office, 507-637-3904, and a member of the pastoral staff will gladly explain why this is confidential.
7. Thank you for your leadership during this exciting time in your congregation’s life. May God give you wisdom, courage, and patience for the work ahead.