

*This contract has been revised for congregations seeking to be authorized by the synod bishop for lay ministry and must be renewed at the end of the signed contract.*

**LETTER OF AGREEMENT FOR SYNOD AUTHORIZED LAY MINISTER**

In keeping with the policies and practices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Southwestern Minnesota Synod, and in order to set forth clearly the agreement for authorized ministry between the congregation and synod authorized lay minister,

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**CONGREGATION**

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**LOCATION**

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**SYNOD AUTHORIZED LAY MINISTER**

*will serve:*

part-time      full-time from                      to                      in accord with the following mutual promises:

**Together the congregation and lay minister will:**

- A. Enhance the congregation’s linkage with synod, churchwide units, and the resources that may be available for ministry.
- B. Help align the congregation in accordance with the constitutions and bylaws of the ELCA, the Southwestern Minnesota Synod, and update the congregation’s constitution as needed.
- C. Equip the congregation’s members and participants in living out their baptism in daily life.
- D. During this period, agree to address the following specific concerns:

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- E. In the case of part-time ministry, agree to the following schedule of service:

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**UPON AUTHORIZATION BY THE BISHOP, THE SYNOD AUTHORIZED LAY MINISTER WILL:**

- A. Preach and teach the Word of God.
  - B. Preside at worship and administer the sacraments according to the practice of the ELCA.
  - C. Provide care to all members of the parish according to their needs, visit as necessary, officiate weddings, baptisms, confirmation, funerals, and uphold the members in prayer.
  - D. Give leadership for the meetings, activities, and organizations of the congregation, as needed or agreed upon.
  - E. Encourage support of the total ministry of the ELCA.
  - F. Be responsible for the recording of baptisms, confirmations, marriages, funerals, attendance at Holy Communion, and the maintenance of the membership rosters; and report the statistics of the parish promptly and fully, as requested by the ELCA.
  - G. Agree not to be involved in the congregation's call process except when the synod bishop requests such participation.
  - H. During this time, give special attention to:
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**THE CONGREGATION WILL:**

- A. Commit to the Gospel by faithful participation in worship, learning, serving, outreach, and fellowship activities.
- B. Support the ministry of the congregation through service and gifts.
- C. Accept the synod authorized lay minister, uphold him/her in prayer, and accord him/her love, respect, and good will.
- D. Expect the synod authorized lay minister to preside at baptisms, celebrations of Holy Communion, and other rites of the church.
- E. Provide for a review and evaluation of the synod authorized lay minister on a quarterly basis and at the conclusion of the transition period by key leadership of the congregation with the lay minister and the appointed synod staff person.

**COMPENSATION WILL OCCUR IN THE FOLLOWING WAY:**

- A. Pay an annual salary of \$ . Payments to be made in equal installments on the and the of the month.
  - B. Housing options: Provide use of parsonage or assist in finding suitable housing options.
  - C. ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Plan
    - a. Provide retirement, medical, dental, disability, and/or death benefits (circle any that apply) as follows:
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- D. Grant one (1) week of vacation for every week(s) of service, not to exceed week(s) per year.
- E. Grant continuing education leave at the rate of days/yr and \$ per/yr toward study expenses.
- F. Reimburse travel expenses related to our common ministry as follows (home visits, nursing homes, hospitals):
  - a. Mileage at current IRS rate (initials).
  - b. Pay expenses incurred in **required** events such as Synod Assembly, Lay Ministry Events, mentor meetings, and other official meetings at which attendance is required. (initials).



Southwestern Minnesota Synod  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

We, the undersigned, accept the terms of this agreement:

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT OR SECRETARY

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DATE

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SYNOD AUTHORIZED LAY MINISTER

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DATE

Attested by:

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BISHOP, SOUTHWESTERN MN SYNOD, ELCA

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DATE

Upon completion, please send signed originals to:

Southwestern Minnesota Synod  
Tammy Schacher  
PO Box 499  
Redwood Falls, MN 56283

Or email to: [tammy.schacher@swmnelca.org](mailto:tammy.schacher@swmnelca.org)