

CONSTITUTIONAL GUIDELINES FOR CALLING A PASTOR NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD

S14.16.01.A2000 The calling of a pastor represents a valuable partnership between God, the congregation, the synod and the ELCA. Each member of the partnership is enriched when the call process results in a good match between pastor and congregation. The total mission of the church is furthered when each member of the partnership is honored, respected, and fulfills its appropriate role in the process.

We seek to follow a process which builds on trust and openness, relies on good communication, and results in a call which is pleasing to God. Throughout this process the congregation holds the authority to call a pastor on the roster of the ELCA. The congregation, the pastors, and the office of the bishop must follow the constitutions of the congregation, synod and ELCA throughout this process. For the sake of an orderly process and good communication, the congregation is encouraged to follow the guidelines of the synod.

WHEN YOUR PASTOR RESIGNS:

1. The president of the congregation calls the synod office to arrange a special council meeting with an assistant to the bishop. This meeting will include:
 - a. Plans for appropriate closure with the current pastor
 - b. Plans for an exit interview with the current pastor
 - c. Arrangements for pastoral ministry during the pastoral vacancy
 - d. Review of the call process
 - e. Guidelines for the selection of the call committee
 - f. Synod guidelines for compensation. The council will establish a salary and benefits range for the call committee.
 - g. Condition of the parsonage or provisions for housing allowance
 - h. Establishing a committee to complete the Ministry Site Profile.
2. Upon election of the call committee, an assistant to the bishop meets with the council and the call committee.
3. Upon completion of the Ministry Site Profile, we encourage the council to present a summary of the Profile to the congregation for its endorsement. The endorsed Profile is sent to the synod office and given to each member of the Call Committee.
4. Within approximately three weeks of receiving the Profile, a representative of the bishop will meet with the call committee. This meeting will include:
 - a. A review of the Ministry Site Profile
 - b. A review of call process ethics
 - c. Planning for the interviews
 - d. An emphasis on good communication with the congregation and interviewing pastors
 - e. Presentation of names for candidates for call

5. The call committee is encouraged to interview all candidates within a two week time span. Upon completion of the interviews, all candidates and the synod office must be notified of the call committee's recommendation to the congregational council.
6. The call committee presents one name and a recommended compensation package to the congregational council for action.
7. In consultation with the synod office, the congregational council calls a congregational meeting for presentation of the recommended candidate and compensation package. A representative of the bishop is invited to the congregational meeting to serve as a resource.
8. The congregation will vote on the recommendation of the call committee and council. Separate votes will be taken for extending the call and for the compensation package. A representative of the congregation will notify the candidate of the vote of the congregation. The Letter of Call will be signed and delivered to the synod office.
9. The pastor may consider a Letter of Call for as long as 15 days. The time consideration may be extended through a consultation with the bishop and congregational president.
10. Upon Acceptance of the call, an installation date is determined in consultation with the called pastor, congregation and synod office. Appropriate welcoming activities are planned.

*C9.02. Only a member of the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended for this congregation by the synod bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation. (*Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*)

It is the policy of the church (not just the synod) that interims are not available for call. The Manual on the Management of Rosters states, "Unless previously agreed to by the Synod Council, an interim pastor is not available for a regular call to the congregation served during this time of transition and shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor."