



Call Packet
for
Congregations
and
Pastoral Candidates

An aid in the call process from the
LCMC Ministry Board

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Introduction

Our fundamental goal as an association is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world. To do this, we believe we need faithful pastors and laity working together through the Holy Spirit.

This call packet is one step toward a good working relationship between a congregation and a pastor. We invite you to follow these guidelines with prayer.

We anticipate that there will be a variety of ministry forms in Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ. These ministry forms will evolve to enable congregations to carry out the mission of Jesus Christ effectively. This call packet is not intended to restrict congregations; rather, it is meant to provide a suggested process and resource by which pastors are trained and called for Word and Sacrament ministry.

These guidelines are as lean as possible, leaving room for adjustment due to particular situations. But a core of solid, basic expectations remains.

Because LCMC districts are still developing, we use the terms ministry board and ministry committee in the following ways:

- (a) The ministry board is an association wide group whose task it is to determine general policies.
- (b) The ministry committee is usually a district group. In the absence of a ministry committee, the LCMC Ministry Board will oversee the process.

Section 1

Call Information for Congregations

Definitions in the Call Process

The Ministry Board of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ recognizes the authority and responsibility of congregations of LCMC to call their pastors. As an association we will maintain a Leadership Link that will provide congregations the opportunity to list their openings and provide candidates a way to inquire directly to congregations concerning those openings.

A call from a congregation may be either a certified or a contract call. They are defined below.

Certified Call

Congregations may call an individual to serve in their congregation with a *certified call*. This means they are calling an individual who is on the LCMC clergy list. Congregations are encouraged to support continuing education for those they call. The congregation will determine the title for the position held by a person with a *certified call*. Standards and terminology may vary by district or congregation.

Contract Call

Congregations may call an individual to serve in their congregation with a *contract call*. This means they are calling an individual who is not recognized by the association as a certified candidate. Persons called on a *contract* basis may provide ministry according to their gifts and as negotiated with the congregation. Further training is recommended. Some candidates may seek to acquire training which leads to certification, while they serve in a *contract call* capacity. The congregation will determine the title for the position held by a person with a *contract call*. Standards and terminology may vary by district or congregation.

Documents a Congregation Should Require from a Candidate Seeking a Call

- a. Contact Information/Credentials Résumé (Attachment B) which includes an agreement with the LCMC Statement of Faith
- b. Background Check Release Form (Attachment C)
- c. Letters of recommendation from a pastor, a co-worker and three other character references who are not relatives
- d. Photocopy of driver's license or an identification equivalent

Reflection on the Call Process

Congregations are responsible to call their own pastor(s).

When considering calling a pastor, congregations should think about their expectations of candidates. One way to address those expectations is to evaluate the person in at least these four areas: theology, morality, faith and practice. These focus areas are offered and intended to provide a way to create discussion and conversation between the congregation and the pastoral candidate.

Theology It is critical that pastors have a solid biblical foundation and can apply the truth of Scripture to life in teaching and preaching. God's Word is given to us to reveal truth, and a personal commitment to the study of the Bible is crucial for the pastor.

As part of the Lutheran community we want to know that our pastors understand the Reformation and Lutheran theology as expressed in the Book of Concord. It is important for pastors to have a good grasp of these principles: Christ alone, faith alone, scripture alone, grace alone and the cross alone. Confessional pastors are able to properly distinguish Law and Gospel.

Pastors also need to consistently address issues of faith and life without confusion or contradiction.

Morality It is essential that pastors live lives worthy of the Gospel. The congregation is responsible to do the necessary checks of the candidate's history. This easily can be done through a county department of human services using the person's Social Security number. There are also other agencies and means by which to accomplish this. Congregations cannot take for granted that pastors are above reproach. It is reasonable to ask the questions, to do the research and to be thorough in doing so.

When pastors fail in morality, the damage can be severe. It is also important to acknowledge that all are sinners in need of a Savior and all are called to practice forgiveness, love and acceptance. The question is how sin will be handled. It is the responsibility of the congregation to determine if a candidate should serve in a leadership role in the congregation.

Faith It is appropriate for a congregation to discuss faith issues with a candidate. What a candidate believes will affect the working relationship between the congregation and the candidate. Asking questions concerning a candidate's faith in Jesus Christ can be very helpful in assessing the potential of the candidate and the congregation to work together.

Practice This area addresses practical skills. The candidate should be adept at listening effectively, organizing groups, speaking with clarity, showing respect and demonstrating good interpersonal skills. Is the pastor faithful and reliable? Does the pastor follow through on what is promised?

Preaching and teaching are very much part of the practice of pastoral ministry. Is the candidate able to communicate effectively from the pulpit and/or in the classroom? Does the candidate demonstrate an interest in improving these areas? The congregation can examine these qualities in a live situation or have the candidate send a recording of a sermon or teaching.

Another aspect of the practice of ministry is leadership. If the congregation expects leadership, then leadership ought to be part of the discussion. Prior to the discussion, the congregation must determine the type of leader it seeks, for example: an administrator, a shepherd of souls, a facilitator who empowers others, a preacher, teacher, etc.

The candidate should be able to describe work and study habits of, an average day or an average week. The congregation might ask the candidate how he or she might divide time, between work and home.

It may be helpful to look up and discuss the following Scriptural references with the congregation, council and/or call committee:

Theology: Ephesians 6:10-18, Hebrews 4:12, I Peter 1:22-23, II Timothy 4:3.

Morality: Romans 6, Philippians 1:27, Colossians 1:9-14, I Timothy 3:1-10, Ephesians 4:25-27.

Faith: Romans 10:8-10 & 17, I Corinthians 13:13, II Corinthians 8:7, Colossians 1:1-6, James 2:14-17.

Practice: II Corinthians 5:18, II Timothy 4:3-5, Ephesians 4:25-27, Matthew 5:33-37, Matthew 20:25-28, Mark 6:31, Philippians 2:1-11.

Suggested Steps of a Call Process

The following outline recommends steps, which congregations may use to seek a pastoral candidate:

1. Perhaps the first step is to determine who you are as a congregation, where you are in your ministry together and what God is calling you to do in the future. Try to be as honest as possible regarding what you want and need. (Caution: Many congregations say they want to grow, but resist any change. Do you want someone to come in and firmly confront you as a congregation, if necessary? Who will support the pastor if he or she does this, and how, specifically, will that support be shown?) See Attachment E regarding writing a congregational profile and Attachment G in writing a job description.
2. A call committee is chosen: it may be elected by the congregation or appointed by the council, which may be affirmed by a congregational vote.
3. The committee should be no more than nine members (for the sake of the candidates) and represent the congregation including all ages. Open lines of communication between the call committee, council and congregation are important at all times in the process, while at the same time respecting confidentiality of the candidates.
4. Call committee members must be available to meet, especially as the committee moves into the interview process.
5. If the pastoral vacancy was caused by strife, sudden death of a pastor or a long pastorate, the council should consider having an interim pastor to help heal the wounds and, if needed, correct causes of the conflict. In addition, consultants who specialize in conflict situations may be called upon.

6. Before securing names of candidates, prepare a packet of materials describing:
 - a. The congregation (See Congregational Profile - Attachment E)
 - b. The community

7. The call committee should:
 - a. Actively seek names of candidates. This can be done through various methods. A congregation might contact area pastors for recommendations, ask for input from congregational members, advertise in various media forums, contact seminaries, utilize the LCMC *Leadership Link*, WordAlone *Clergy Connect* or other online services. Names of candidates may come from other sources not listed here.
 - b. Ask for a résumé from all pastors whom you are potentially interested in interviewing. The document "Contact Information/Credentials Résumé" (Attachment B) can be a start, but you can request any additional information as appropriate.
 - c. Prayerfully determine which résumés seem to best match your specific needs/desires.

8. Phone interviews may help to narrow the number of candidates to bring in for a face-to-face interview. The call committee may prepare a brief list of questions to be used in the phone interview.
 - a. These can be done through a speakerphone with the call committee gathered together in one location, or through a conference call set up through the phone company (more expensive, but easier for everyone to hear/participate.)
 - i. During the phone and/or face-to-face interview, don't hesitate to ask direct and penetrating questions. (Note below section 10. e.) Feel free to add your own questions. You might think all candidates' answers would agree on these questions, *but they don't!* Not all seminary professors teach traditional Christian theology or values.
 - ii. It's the congregation's responsibility to exercise due diligence.
 - b. The call committee is not looking for someone who interviews well, but for a pastor who fits the congregation.

9. The chair or appointed person on the committee should then arrange for the interview at times when the whole committee will be present. Do not stretch out this phase of the process. Candidates are anxious. If there is a delay, notify them. Whenever a candidate is eliminated from the process, notify that person.

10. Plan the interview carefully. It is suggested that:
 - a. The interviews are confidential
 - b. The interview with the call committee lasts from one to two hours, but no more than two hours.
 - c. The visit before and/or after the interview could include time to get to know the community.

- d. Consider how to make the most of the interview visit. Are the spouse and/or family invited? If so which parts should they attend? The candidate might also visit with other church staff, the church council and a larger group of the congregation at an open forum. The committee may want to determine if each candidate is to preach and lead worship at the congregational site. If the candidate is currently serving a congregation the committee or members of it might travel there (caution: check with the candidate first, as this may or may not be possible or advisable). Or, ask for audio/video tapes of his or her worship services. The congregation should expect to pay the expenses for any such trips or resources it requests. Be sure to inform the candidate beforehand of all components of the visit.
- e. In developing interview questions, a call committee may use the following examples:
- i. What do you believe is the central doctrine or teaching of Christianity?
 - ii. Why is the Gospel of Jesus good news to you personally?
 - iii. In a time when Christianity is viewed as but one of many world religions, how do you respond to Acts 4:12, which states: "there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved"? (Acts 4:12b) Who will be saved, and from what?
 - iv. Are there changes in your life that you directly attribute to the work of the Holy Spirit?
 - v. What is meant by "sola Scriptura" or "only Scripture?" What does this mean for your potential ministry here, especially in your preaching and teaching?
 - vi. Are there issues of morality, which have an absolute right and wrong? If so, give an example of such an issue.
 - vii. The Apostle Paul states that "no one is righteous, no, not one." (Romans 3:10) How do you understand this truth as set forth in both Old and New Testaments?
 - viii. What does Christian unity or "the communion of saints," as expressed in the Apostles' Creed, mean to you?
 - ix. Do you believe that in ordination, God gives pastors special spiritual powers not available to lay people? What is ordination and why does the church have it?
 - x. Why are you a Lutheran Christian? What does Luther's teaching on law/gospel mean to you?
 - xi. What gifts of ministry do you have to offer to the mission of Jesus Christ in this particular call?
 - xii. What are your strengths and weaknesses as a pastor?
 - xiii. What is the most challenging aspect of ministry for you as a pastor?
 - xiv. What is your understanding of baptism?

- xv. What is your understanding of communion?
 - xvi. What is your understanding of the office of preaching and absolution?
 - xvii. What questions do you have for us?
11. If you need to interview more candidates, contact the sources noted above and repeat appropriate steps.
 12. Once the list of candidates has been narrowed to those the call committee could reasonably consider recommending, check references. If the candidate has not already volunteered this information, ask. Before contacting the references, make sure the candidate knows the committee will be doing so. (If a reference is listed in his/her present congregation, the candidate needs to know that the references will be contacted. The candidate might suggest specific means for doing so discreetly.) It is certainly appropriate to contact previous congregations where a candidate has served, but exercise care in contacting the existing congregation where a candidate might be serving. (For example, calling the church secretary or congregational president directly, or having the call committee show up as a group for worship, would be inappropriate unless the candidate specifically gave permission.)
 13. Do a background check of the candidate. Make sure you have a background check permission form from the candidate before proceeding. A question concerning criminal conviction is asked on the Contact Information/Credentials Résumé (Attachment B), but you need to know if there's something in the candidate's background that's not being disclosed before you find out independently. Those with nothing to hide will understand and appreciate this care and effort. Don't assume anything. Ask questions. Consult your local county attorney's office concerning the laws of the states and counties the candidate has lived in order to do a complete background check. Responsible call committees will do thorough background checks. Failure to do this opens the congregation to potential legal liability.
 14. There are at least two ways to recommend pastoral candidates to the congregation. The call committee/church council may choose to recommend only one candidate or the call committee/church council may find reasons to recommend two or three candidates to the congregation. The first way entrusts the call committee/church council with the responsibility to present a finalist. In the second way more selection responsibility is exercised by the congregation.
 15. Alert the president of the congregation so that a fair salary will be offered. A rule of thumb is to not go below the person's current salary.
 - a. The council should set salary parameters before candidates are selected. Cost might eliminate some candidates, but do not be afraid to stretch.
 - b. Before negotiating a salary package with the candidate, you can contact other local congregations to find out what is typical for your area, size of congregation and background/experience of the candidate.
 16. Proceed with a call to a candidate, according to the congregation's bylaws.
 17. The congregation will issue the letter of call. Sample forms for a letter of call will be made available by either the district of which the congregation is a member or by the association; these forms can be adapted to the local setting (Note Attachment

D). A cover letter should ask for a response in a defined time period, such as "no more than three weeks." If the candidate accepts the call, expect an interval of up to 30 days before the candidate begins to work in your congregation.

18. When the newly called pastor arrives, there should be an ordination/installation conducted by the congregation president, neighboring pastor or a selected friend of the new pastor. A reception is in good order.
19. An official announcement should be made to the district(s) with which the congregation is associated and the LCMC Service Coordinator for the sake of keeping an up-to-date list. Designate an appropriate person from the call committee or congregation to make this announcement.

Internship / Residency

The congregation may examine the possibility of being a residency/internship site for a candidate who is working toward a *certified call*. The congregation may issue a *contract call* to an individual during the period of residency/internship and then at a later date issue a *certified call* to the same candidate.

Ordination / Installation

The following quote concerning ordination is from The Book of Concord: "Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope: The Power and Jurisdiction of Bishops" (1537)

*"But since the distinction between bishop and pastor is not by divine right, it is manifest that ordination administered by a pastor in his own church is valid by divine right. Consequently, when the regular bishops become enemies of the Gospel and are unwilling to administer ordination, * the churches retain the right to ordain for themselves. For wherever the church exists, the right to administer the Gospel also exists. Wherefore it is necessary for the church to retain the right of calling, electing and ordaining ministers.*

This right is a gift given exclusively to the church, and no human authority can take it away from the church. It is as Paul testifies to the Ephesians when he says, "When he ascended on high he gave gifts to men" (Ephesians 4:8, 11, 12). He enumerates pastors and teachers among the gifts belonging exclusively to the church, and he adds that they are given for the work of ministry and for building up the body of Christ. Where the true church is, therefore, the right of electing and ordaining ministers must of necessity also be. So in an emergency even a layman absolves and becomes the minister and pastor of another.

*It is like the example, which Augustine relates of two Christians in a ship, one of whom baptized the other (a catechumen), and the latter, after his Baptism, absolved the former. * Here the words of Christ apply which testify that the keys were given to the church and not merely to certain individuals: "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). Finally, this is confirmed by the declaration of Peter, "You are a royal priesthood" (1 Peter 2:9). These words apply to the true church, which, since it alone possesses the priesthood, certainly has the right of electing and ordaining ministers. "*

Upon completion of the requirements listed in Attachment A and the issuing of a call by an LCMC congregation, the candidate will be ordained/installed.

The ordination may take place in the congregation issuing the call or another congregation. The ordinator may be a layperson or pastor designated by the congregation.

Pastors and other laypersons may be invited to participate in the service, which may include the laying on of hands (Acts 6:6). The laying on of hands is not restricted to clergy.

The "Rite of Ordination" should contain a public declaration by the called pastor to approve and subscribe to the statement of faith of the LCMC association.

Colloquy Process

If a congregation wants to have a certified call issued to a candidate not on the LCMC list a colloquy will occur. Colloquy means a conversation, a dialogue, a serious discussion or a conference.

The colloquy process may vary from situation to situation. For a *certified call* the involved district will conduct the colloquy according to their standards. In situations where there is no district involved, the LCMC Ministry Board will provide a course of action to name a colloquy team to administer the process.

The List

LCMC and its districts will maintain a list of those serving in congregational and specialized ministry settings who have subscribed to the LCMC Statement of Faith. The list will include those with a certified call, a contract call, retired (emeritus) and those currently without call (specialized ministry listed if appropriate).

The LCMC Service Coordinator will maintain the list in a timely manner.

An updated list will be made available to all LCMC congregations upon request. The list will also be maintained on the LCMC website.

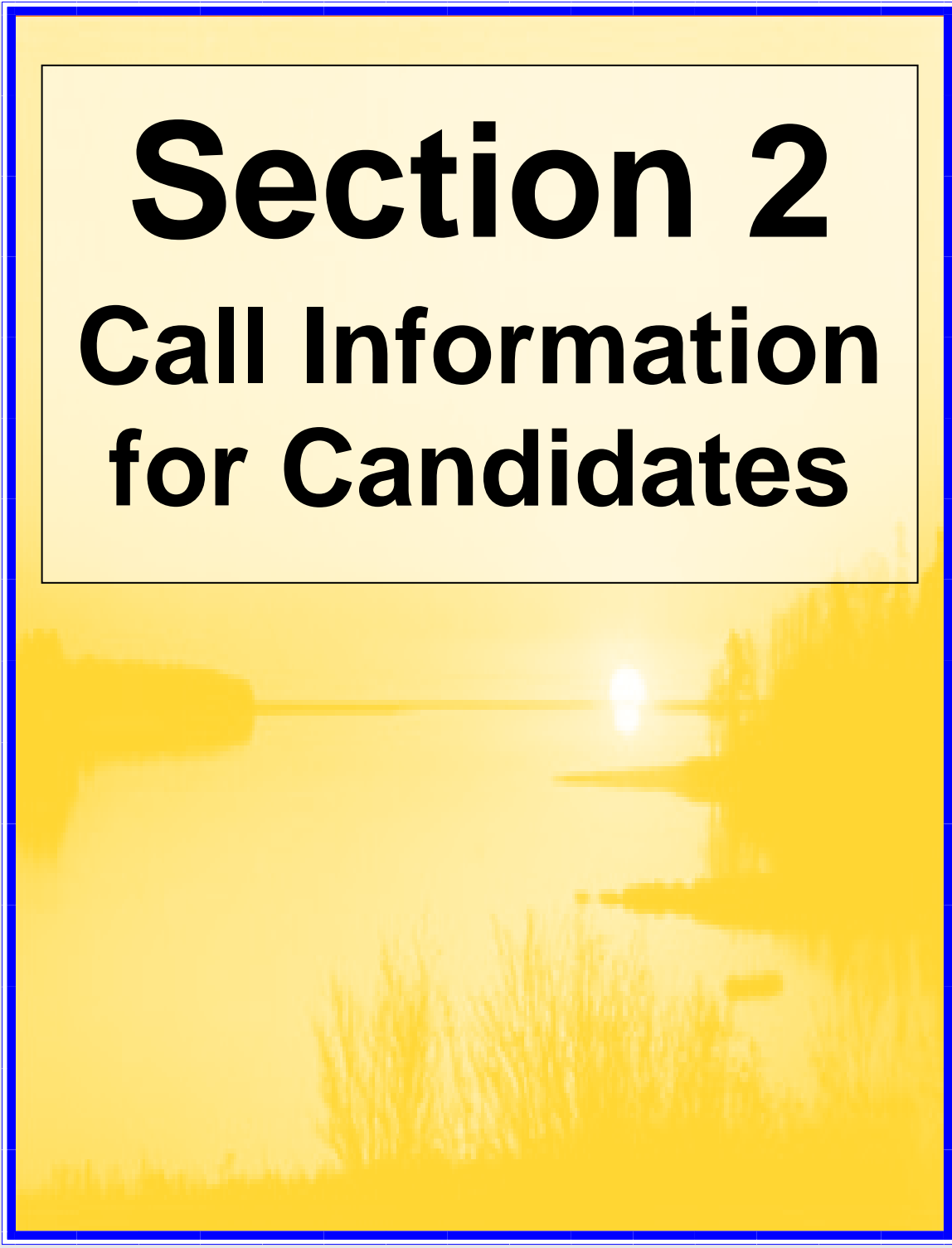
A congregation, district and/or LCMC Ministry Board will notify the LCMC Service Coordinator of any additions or changes to the list.

Knowledge of or disclosure of criminal convictions may warrant removal from this list. Moral and criminal issues, which affect a current call, are dealt with by the congregation and may change a pastor's status on the list.

LCMC as an association does not keep files on people on the list other than contact information.

Section 2

Call Information for Candidates



Definitions in the Call Process

The Ministry Board of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ recognizes the authority and responsibility of congregations of LCMC to call their pastors. As an association, we will maintain a Leadership Link that will provide congregations the opportunity to list their openings and offer candidates a way to inquire directly to congregations concerning those openings.

A call to a congregation may be either a certified or a contract call. They are defined below.

Certified Call

Congregations may call an individual to serve in their congregation with a *certified call*. This means they are calling an individual who is on the LCMC clergy list. Continuing education is recommended. The congregation will determine the title for the position held by a person with a *certified call*. Standards and terminology may vary by district or congregation.

Contract Call

Congregations may call an individual to serve in their congregation with a *contract call*. This means they are calling an individual who is not recognized by the association as a certified candidate. Persons called on a *contract* basis may provide ministry according to their gifts and as negotiated with the congregation. Further training is recommended. Some candidates may seek to acquire training which leads to certification while they serve in a *contract call* capacity. The congregation will determine the title for the position held by a person with a *contract call*. Standards and terminology may vary by district or congregation.

Documents a Candidate Should Prepare in Seeking a Call

Submission of the following documents:

- a. Contact Information/Credentials Résumé (Attachment B) which includes an agreement of the LCMC Statement of Faith
- b. Background Check Release Form (Attachment C)
- c. Letters of recommendation from a pastor, a co-worker and three other character references who are not relatives
- d. Photocopy of driver's license or an identification equivalent

Credentials for Certified Call

Candidates will have a master of divinity degree from an accredited theological school or its equivalent.

- a. If possible, representatives from LCMC or a mentoring pastor will develop a relationship with students while they are in training.
- b. The ministry board or a group designated by the ministry board will decide if additional education should be assigned through a colloquy process.

- c. Candidates will have at least a year of internship or its equivalent. This can be the regular seminary internship, an internship/residency arranged by a district or an equivalent experience, such as previous supervised experience in a congregation or positions in staff ministries following seminary graduation.
- d. Clinical Pastoral Education - CPE - is recommended and may be selectively required.

Reflection on the Call Process

Congregations are responsible to call their own pastor(s).

All candidates should evaluate themselves in at least the following four areas: theology, morality, faith and practice.

1. **Theology** It is critical that pastors have a solid biblical foundation and can apply the truth of Scripture to life in teaching and preaching. God's Word is given to us to reveal truth, and a personal commitment to the study of the Bible is crucial for the pastor.

As part of the Lutheran community, a candidate should have a good understanding of the Reformation and Lutheran theology as expressed in the Book of Concord. It is important for candidates to have a good grasp of these principles: Christ alone, faith alone, scripture alone, grace alone and the cross alone. Confessional pastors are able to properly distinguish Law and Gospel.

Pastors also need to be able to consistently address issues of faith and life without confusion or contradiction.

2. **Morality** It is essential that pastors live a life that is worthy of the Gospel. The congregation is responsible to do the necessary checks of the candidate's history. A pastoral candidate can easily assist a congregational call committee by supplying a release form for a background check, together with the candidate's Social Security number. A candidate should not be offended if the committee does not take for granted that pastors are above reproach.

When pastors fail, it is often in morality, and the damage can be severe. It is also important to acknowledge that all are sinners in need of a Savior and all are called to practice forgiveness, love and acceptance. The question is how sin will be handled. Jesus calls us to confess, repent and receive forgiveness, living a renewed and transformed life.

As a candidate, if you have an area of your life that will hinder your service in the office of pastor, please do not become a pastoral candidate until such issues have been dealt with. Honesty is the best path to take so that you or others are not harmed. Please understand it is the responsibility and right of a congregation to determine if a candidate should serve in a leadership role in the congregation.

3. **Faith** As a pastoral candidate you might be asked: "Tell us about your faith in Jesus Christ. Do you have a consistent prayer life and do you read God's Word devotionally?"

A congregation should expect its pastor to be a leader who demonstrates faith in daily life.

4. **Practice** This area addresses practical skills. A candidate should be adept at listening effectively and organizing groups. He or she should be able to speak with clarity, respect others and demonstrate good interpersonal skills. Ministry is always about people, and the work of a pastor is described in the Bible as that of a shepherd. A candidate might be asked, “Do you demonstrate a desire to serve and love God’s people?”

Preaching and teaching are very much part of the practice of pastoral ministry. A call committee may probe to see if a candidate is able to communicate effectively from the pulpit or in the classroom. A candidate should be able to demonstrate proficiency in these areas and/or be willing to seek professional growth in public speaking.

Another aspect of the practice of ministry is leadership. Leadership includes the ability to make good decisions and the willingness to be held accountable both to God and to God’s people for decisions made. Leadership from a biblical perspective is also about servanthood. If leadership is part of the expectations of the congregation, then leadership ought to be part of the discussion. It is suggested a candidate try to discern what type of leader he or she is for example: administrator, shepherd, facilitator who empowers others, preacher or teacher.

A pastoral candidate should be able to describe work and study habits of, an average day or an average week.

A pastoral candidate may want to reflect on these topics of ministry standards as reflected in the following Scriptural references:

Theology: Ephesians 6:10-18, Hebrews 4:12, I Peter 1:22-23, II Timothy 4:3.

Morality: Romans 6, Philippians 1:27, Colossians 1:9-14, I Timothy 3:1-10, Ephesians 4:25-27.

Faith: Romans 10:8-10 & 17, I Corinthians 13:13, II Corinthians 8:7, Colossians 1:1-6, James 2:14-17.

Practice: II Corinthians 5:18, II Timothy 4:3-5, Ephesians 4:25-27, Matthew 5:33-37, Matthew 20:25-28, Mark 6:31, Philippians 2:1-11.

Suggested Steps of a Call Process

The following outline recommends steps to follow if you are a candidate for a pastoral position:

1. Perhaps the first step is to determine who you are as a child of God, where you are on your Christian pilgrimage, and where God might be leading you. Try to be as honest as possible with yourself and/or a mentor you trust. Pray for God’s guidance.
2. Assess your gifts and skills for ministry. In what specific ways might you serve the Lord and His church?
3. Actively seek positions. This can be done through various methods. For example, you might contact area pastors to see if they know of openings. Ask for input from a mentor, read advertisements in various media forums, contact districts for known openings, use the LCMC Leadership Link, WordAlone Clergy Connect or other online services. Network actively and pray daily.

4. Prepare a résumé. The Attachment B – (Application of Admission/Credentials Résumé) can be a start, but you can include in the résumé additional information which you think is relevant.
 - i. There are books and seminars to assist people in the writing of resumes. Attachment F can serve as a resource.
 - ii. You also can request a congregational profile.
5. Once entering a call process, you as a candidate may become anxious if the process is moving very slowly. Do not panic. These things often take time and your patience and professionalism may positively influence a call committee.
6. A pastoral candidate may be asked to participate in a phone interview. Call committees sometimes will use such interviews to screen candidates and/or to prepare for further steps in the process.
 - a. During a phone or face-to-face interview, don't hesitate to ask direct questions about the congregation.
7. Be candid and honest with the call committee. The goal is not to interview well, but rather to determine whether you fit with the congregation.
 - a. The interview should be confidential, however some call committees might ask you if they can tape the interview for the benefit of other members who cannot attend the interview. If you prefer not to have the interview taped, you will need to give the committee a reason.
 - b. If you are invited to interview face to face, there may be opportunity to get to know the community before or after the interview. Be sure to allow plenty of time for this.
 - c. A call committee may ask you questions like those listed below. Reflect on questions like these to be prepared for the interview.
 - a. What do you believe is the central doctrine or teaching of Christianity?
 - b. Why is the Gospel of Jesus good news to you personally?
 - c. In a time when Christianity is viewed as but one of many world religions, how do you respond to Acts 4:12, which states: "there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved"? (Acts 4:12b) Who will be saved, and from what?
 - d. Are there changes in your life that you directly attribute to the work of the Holy Spirit?
 - e. What is meant by "sola Scriptura" or "only Scripture?" What does this mean for your potential ministry here, especially in your preaching and teaching?
 - f. Are there issues of morality, which have an absolute right and wrong? If so, give an example of such an issue.
 - g. The Apostle Paul states that "no one is righteous, no, not one." (Romans 3:10) How do you understand this truth as set forth in both Old and New Testaments?

- h. What does Christian unity or "the communion of saints," as expressed in the Apostles' Creed, mean to you?
 - i. Do you believe that in ordination, God gives pastors special spiritual powers not available to lay people? What is ordination?
 - j. Why are you a Lutheran Christian? What does Luther's teaching on law/gospel mean to you?
 - k. What gifts of ministry do you have that contribute to the mission of Jesus Christ in this particular call?
 - l. What are your strengths and weaknesses as a pastor?
 - m. What is the most challenging aspect of ministry for you as a pastor?
 - n. What is your understanding of baptism?
 - o. What is your understanding of communion?
 - p. What is your understanding of the office of preaching and absolution?
 - q. What questions do you have for us?
- d. Consider how to make the most of the interview visit. The call committee or its representative should inform you if they want spouse and/or family attend. There may be other staff to meet. In addition to the call committee, you may be asked to meet with the church council or participate in an open forum with a larger group of the congregation. You may be asked to preach and lead worship or be asked for audio/video tapes of existing services.
8. Our times are such that congregations must do a background check on pastoral candidates. Candidates with nothing to hide should understand and appreciate this care and effort. Candidates with something to hide should not be pastoral candidates.
9. When it comes time to negotiate a salary package with the congregation, a candidate can contact other local congregations to get an idea of what's typical for the area, size of congregation and clergy with similar experience.
10. The congregation will issue the letter of call. A cover letter may ask for a response in a specified time period such as "no more than three weeks." If you accept, the congregation realizes that you may need as much as 30 days before you can take up your new responsibilities.
11. Upon your arrival in the new call, the congregational president, neighboring pastor or a person of your choosing, should conduct an ordination or installation.
12. An official announcement will be made to the district with which the congregation is associated and the LCMC Service Coordinator for the sake of keeping an up-to-date list.

Ordination / Installation

The following quote concerning ordination is from The Book of Concord: "Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope: The Power and Jurisdiction of Bishops" (1537)

"But since the distinction between bishop and pastor is not by divine right, it is manifest that ordination administered by a pastor in his own church is valid by divine right. Consequently, when the regular bishops become enemies of the Gospel and are unwilling to administer ordination, the churches retain the right to ordain for*

themselves. For wherever the church exists, the right to administer the Gospel also exists. Wherefore it is necessary for the church to retain the right of calling, electing, and ordaining ministers.

This right is a gift given exclusively to the church, and no human authority can take it away from the church. It is as Paul testifies to the Ephesians when he says, "When he ascended on high he gave gifts to men" (Ephesians 4:8, 11, 12). He enumerates pastors and teachers among the gifts belonging exclusively to the church, and he adds that they are given for the work of ministry and for building up the body of Christ. Where the true church is, therefore, the right of electing and ordaining ministers must of necessity also be. So in an emergency even a layman absolves and becomes the minister and pastor of another.

It is like the example which Augustine relates of two Christians in a ship, one of whom baptized the other (a catechumen), and the latter, after his Baptism, absolved the former. Here the words of Christ apply which testify that the keys were given to the church and not merely to certain individuals: "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew. 18:20). Finally, this is confirmed by the declaration of Peter, "You are a royal priesthood" (1 Peter. 2:9). These words apply to the true church, which, since it alone possesses the priesthood, certainly has the right of electing and ordaining ministers."*

Upon completion of the credentialed requirements and the issuing of a call by an LCMC congregation the candidate will be ordained/installed.

The ordination may take place in the congregation issuing the call or another congregation. The ordinator may be a layperson or pastor designated by the congregation.

Pastors and other laypersons may be invited to participate in the service and be included in the laying on of hands. (Acts 6:6)

The "Rite of Ordination" will contain a public declaration by the called pastor to approve and subscribe to the Statement of Faith and the Pastoral Admonitions of the LCMC association.

Colloquy Process

If a congregation wants to have a certified call issued to a candidate not on the LCMC list a colloquy will occur. Colloquy means a conversation, a dialogue, a serious discussion or a conference.

The colloquy process may vary from situation to situation. For a *certified call* the involved district will conduct the colloquy according to their standards. In situations where there is no district involved, the LCMC Ministry Board will provide a course of action to name a colloquy team to administer the process.

The colloquy team will review documents submitted by the candidate and determine an action plan for the process. The team may hold an information-gathering session to aid in the development of an effective plan and process. Depending on the background of the individual the team may conclude only one session is necessary, which might entail a discussion of theological, leadership, character, spiritual and/or ministry issues of concern.

Some colloquy situations may involve numerous sessions between the team and the individual. They may comprise guided reading and reflection on one or more topics, taking of

classes, joining other candidates for a seminar format, a mentor relationship for a period of time or other specified options.

Candidates may be required to travel to meet with the colloquy team at the candidates' expense.

The following questions may be asked during a colloquy but are not limited to these questions alone:

1. How do you know that God calls you to the public ministry?
2. What gifts of ministry do you have? How could those gifts contribute to the mission of Jesus Christ in a local congregation or specialized ministry?
3. What are your strengths and weaknesses as a pastor?
4. What is the most challenging aspect of ministry for you as a pastor?
5. Define the distinction between Law and Gospel and how this distinction functions in the ministry of Word and Sacrament?
6. What is your understanding of baptism?
7. What is your understanding of communion?
8. What is your understanding of the office of preaching and absolution?
9. What is your understanding of "justification by faith alone"?
10. What is your understanding of "the Christian church"?
11. Why do you want to join the ministry of LCMC? of the _____ district? of _____ congregation?

The List

LCMC and its districts will maintain a list of those serving in congregational and specialized ministry settings who have subscribed to the LCMC Statement of Faith and Pastoral Admonitions. The list will include those with a certified call, a contract call, retired (emeritus) and those currently without call.

After three years of not having a call (except retired pastors), a candidate's status will be evaluated by the LCMC Ministry Board or its designates.

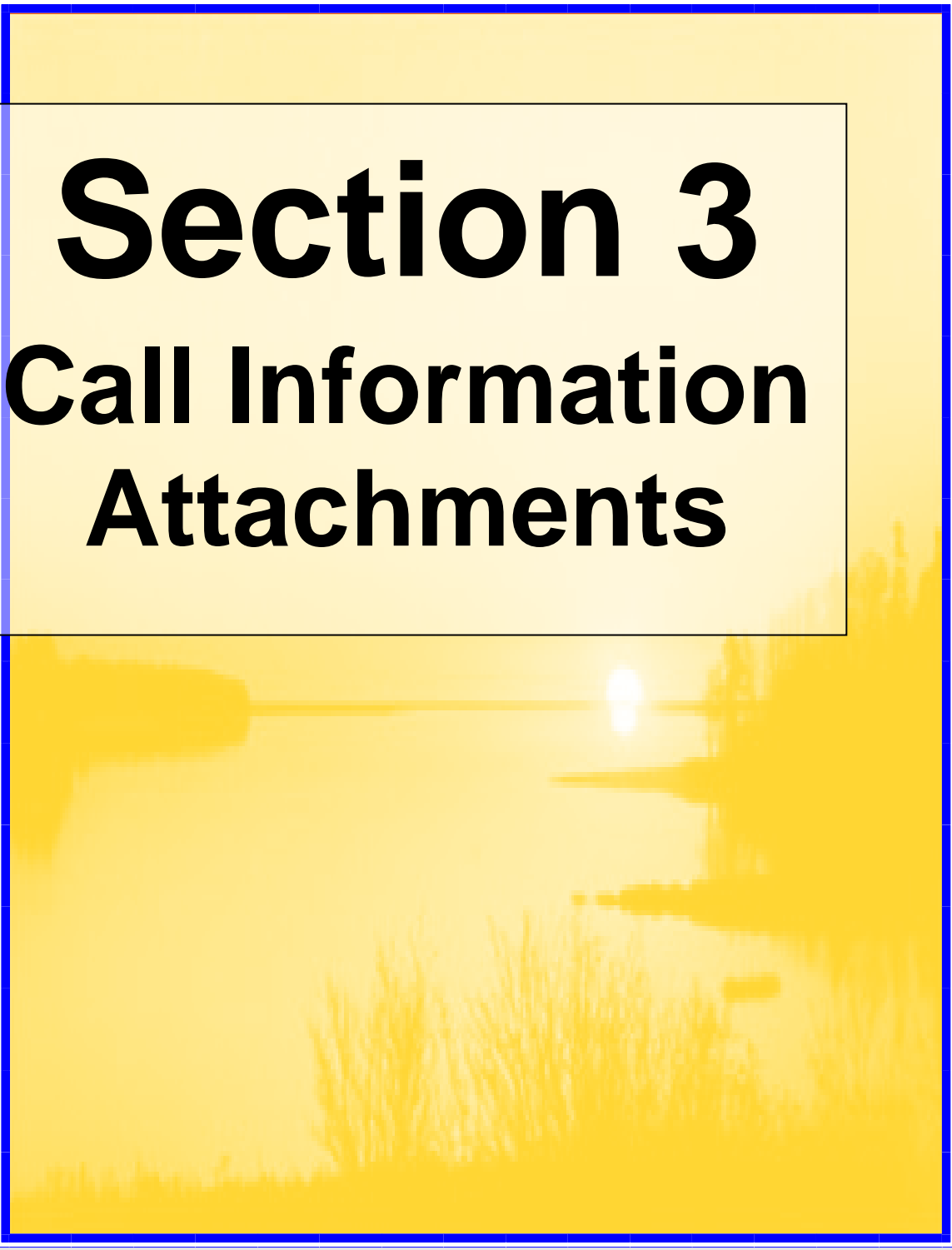
The LCMC Service Coordinator will maintain the list in a timely manner.

An updated list will be made available to all LCMC congregations upon request.

A congregation, district and/or LCMC Ministry Board will notify the LCMC Service Coordinator of any additions or changes to the list.

Knowledge of or disclosure of criminal convictions may warrant removal from this list. Moral and criminal issues, which would affect a current call, are dealt with by the congregation and may change a pastor's status on the list.

LCMC as an association does not keep files on people on the list other than contact information.



Section 3

Call Information

Attachments

Ministry Standards and Procedures for Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ Clergy – (Attachment A)

Introduction

This association affirms the priesthood of all believers. It commits itself in function and structure to equip and support all members of its congregations for their ministries within and outside of the household of faith. It is within and from this context of ministry that we declare that some are called by God to the public ministry of Word and Sacrament and other specific ministries. At the same time, all baptized members of our congregations are priests called by God to ministries in their daily lives. **(LCMC Constitution – Article 3 – Ministry 3.01)**

These ministry standards and procedures identify qualities of and qualifications for LCMC clergy.

Congregations are responsible to call their pastor. A call from a congregation may be either a certified or a contract call. They are defined below.

Certified Call

Congregations may call an individual to serve in their congregation with a *certified call*. This means they are calling an individual who is on the LCMC clergy list. Congregations are encouraged to support continuing education for those they call. The congregation will determine the title for the position held by a person with a *certified call*. Standards and terminology may vary by district or congregation.

Contract Call

Congregations may call an individual to serve in their congregation with a *contract call*. This means they are calling an individual who is not recognized by the association as a certified candidate. Persons called on a *contract* basis may provide ministry according to their gifts and as negotiated with the congregation. Further training is recommended. Some candidates may seek to acquire training which leads to certification, while they serve in a *contract call* capacity. The congregation will determine the title for the position held by a person with a *contract call*. Standards and terminology may vary by district or congregation.

Further definitions for these standards are as follows:

Ministry Board

The ministry board is an association wide group whose task is to determine general policies.

Ministry Committee

The ministry committee is usually a district group. In the absence of a ministry committee, the LCMC Ministry Board will oversee the process.

Standards for a Certified Call in LCMC

Candidates will subscribe to the LCMC Statement of Faith, if related to a district the district's ministry standards, state and federal laws and expectations of their endorsing agent.

Procedures for a Certified Call in LCMC

- 1) Candidates will have a bachelor's degree or its equivalent and a masters of divinity degree from an accredited theological school or its equivalent.
- 2) If possible, a mentoring pastor assigned by a ministry committee will develop a relationship with the student while that student is in seminary.
- 3) When appropriate, psychological testing may be administered.
- 4) For students or graduates of non-Lutheran seminaries, the ministry committee will decide what additional education should be assigned.
- 5) Candidates will have a year of internship/residency or its equivalent. This can be a regular seminary internship, an internship/residency arranged by a ministry committee, or an equivalent experience, such as previous supervised work in a congregation.
- 6) Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) may be selectively required.
- 7) Candidates will participate in a certification interview with a ministry committee. Upon completion of the certification interview and approval for a certified call, the LCMC office will be informed of the candidate's availability for call.
- 8) Clergy on the roster of another denomination, who wish to become listed as LCMC clergy, can apply to the colloquy process in LCMC.
- 9) To have a certified call a candidate must have a letter of call from a congregation.
- 10) Upon completion of the above, the candidate can be ordained/installed.

Standards for a Contract Call in LCMC

Candidates will subscribe to the LCMC Statement of Faith, if related to a district the district's ministry standards, state and federal laws and expectations of their endorsing agent.

Procedures for an LCMC Contract Call

In an effort to provide for maximum flexibility to congregation to meet a variety of ministry needs, congregations and/or a ministry committee will establish the procedures for a contract call.

People in a contract call may be authorized for Word and Sacrament ministry. The congregation will give such authorization and will notify an appropriate district and the LCMC association office. This notification will be made so that persons in a contract call will be invited to appropriate pastors' meetings and continuing education opportunities.

Inclusion on the List of LCMC Clergy

LCMC and its districts will maintain a list of those serving in congregational and specialized ministry settings who have subscribed to the LCMC Statement of Faith. The list will include those with a certified call, a contract call, retired (emeritus) and those currently without call.

After three years of not having a call (except retired pastors), a candidate's status will be evaluated by the LCMC Ministry Board or its designates.

The LCMC Service Coordinator will maintain the list in a timely manner.

An updated list will be made available to all LCMC congregations upon request.

A congregation, district and/or LCMC Ministry Board will notify the LCMC Service Coordinator of any additions or changes to the list.

Knowledge of or disclosure of criminal convictions may warrant removal from this list. Moral and criminal issues, which would affect a current call, are dealt with by the congregation and may change a pastor's status on the list.

LCMC as an association does not keep files on people on the list other than contact information.

Contact Information/Credentials Résumé (Attachment B)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Address 2: _____ Cell/pgr: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

E-mail: _____ Social Security _____

Educational Background: (please list high school, college, seminary and any additional degrees, plus graduation dates):

Have you completed a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)? _____

If so, please provide contact information: _____

Church employment history: (please list all churches served, including address, your title, dates served and primary responsibilities)

Other employment history:

Have you ever been indicted for a felony? If yes, please describe:

Please describe in one paragraph your vision and gifts for ministry:

I subscribe and adhere to the LCMC Statement of Faith in the LCMC constitution.
(Available at web site address: <http://www.lcmc.net>.)

Signed: _____

Enclosures Required:

- Copy of diploma or certified transcript from college
- Copy of diploma or certified transcript from seminary
- Colloquy documents (if needed)
- Ordination Certificate
- Background Check Release Form
- Photocopy of Driver's License

Background Check Release Form (Attachment C)

I hereby authorize the release to _____, a congregation where I am seeking a call, of any information held by parties regarding my prior employment, criminal, credit, driving, workers comp and educational history as well as information regarding my general character and reputation. I release any providers of this information from any liability for such information. I agree that falsification of information I provide may make me ineligible for employment or call and subject to immediate dismissal if hired or called. I further acknowledge that this congregation is relying on third-party information and I therefore release this congregation, its district and the association from any and all liability arising out of errors or omissions.

Signed _____

Print Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ / _____ / _____

Date _____ / _____ / _____

Social Security Number _____

(On reverse side, please list all states and counties in which you have ever lived)

The Letter of Call (Attachment D)

This call is issued in the Name of God the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit. Amen

The congregation of _____ at a meeting of the congregation held on _____ has called you, _____ to serve as _____ of this congregation.

The fundamental character, detailed responsibilities and conditions of this call are specified in the following pages attached to this letter of call. The congregation will support you in prayer, love, esteem, encouragement and personal assistance.

Representing the congregation the following ascribe their names this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

Congregational President

Congregational Secretary

Congregational Profile (Attachment E)

(Sample Congregational Profile)

Part 1 - Congregational Information

Date: _____

- 1) Name of Congregation:
 - i) Address:
 - ii) Phone:
 - iii) Fax:
 - iv) E-mail:
 - v) Web page:
- 2) Congregation council chair and contact information:
- 3) Call committee chair and contact information:
- 4) List three events or developments that are important from the history of your congregation. Please indicate dates. If you have a short, concise congregational history, please attach it.
- 5) Construction date of church building:
- 6) Date of last renovation:
- 7) Comment on significant trends in congregational demographics.
- 8) Congregation constitution was last updated (send a copy to the candidate):

Part II - Ministry Practices, Structure, and Future

- 1) Describe the congregation's present program/practices:
 - a) Worship (time, type, style, frequency of communion)
 - b) Education (adult, youth, confirmation)
 - c) Evangelism
 - d) Special ministries:

- 2) Describe the service ministries of the congregation and its community involvement and partnerships.
- 3) Describe the congregation's present staffing, including both paid and volunteers.
- 4) In the past five years, has the congregation conducted a process to review its ministry/goals? Please attach a current mission and/or vision statement with corresponding goals and timeline.
- 5) Is any building program projected? If so, when? Please describe existing building issues that may need to be addressed and the current extent of handicapped accessibility.
- 6) Describe the congregation's stewardship practices.
- 7) Please attach a current spending plan for the congregation. Additionally, describe savings, endowments or investments and how these funds are to be used.
- 8) What are the congregation's needs and strengths? What pastoral skills will best serve the Lord in this particular setting?
- 9) Outline the call process as unique to this specific congregation.

Writing a Résumé – (Attachment F)

Résumé writing can sometimes seem a little daunting, especially for anyone who is just putting together his or her first one. It will be helpful to keep the following things in mind. First, writing a resume is easier than most people think. Second, plan to spend a significant amount of thought and time writing your résumé. Revising your résumé more than once will make for a better product in the end. After all, you want your résumé to demonstrate your best qualifications to your future congregation.

A résumé is typically a ONE-page document, which should tastefully highlight your most significant talents and achievements pertinent to the position you will be seeking. It should NOT include all the details of your life! Each word should be chosen carefully in order to make it clear, concise, organized, and easy to read. Keep in mind that the typical employer takes no longer than a 20 second visual sweep over a résumé. Only the best resumes, not candidates, get longer attention and possibly an interview, so you will want to make sure that your résumé communicates efficiently and effectively.

Résumé writing basics...

Things to think about before writing your résumé:

1. Research the congregation and the position to find out what skills, knowledge, values and experience are needed for the position.
2. List of primary jobs you've held, including any unpaid work that shows you have the skills for the position. Also list all the skills you have developed at each of these positions.
3. Now select three or four of your strongest skills or abilities that make you a good candidate for the position.
4. For each key skill, think of several accomplishments from your past paid or non-paid history to illustrate those skills.
5. Make a list of your training and education, which relates to the position for which you are applying.
6. Select a résumé format:
You have options when organizing the information on your résumé. Chose a résumé format that fits your situation - chronological, functional, or combination.

Headings to include:

Name

- Use your formal name (Elizabeth M. Smith, instead of Liz Smith)
- Your name should stand out from the rest of the text by being larger in font, bold, or CAPS
- If necessary, include your middle name to help clarify ambiguous names (Corey Nathan Smith, etc.)

Address

- Use your current address. If you are moving, include your new address (or permanent address if you are unsure of where you will be living) and the date to start using it.

Telephone number

- Use your home phone number and be sure call committees will be able to leave a message. Make sure that your answering machine message sounds professional.
- If you choose to use a cell phone to be sure you get your messages, be cautious where you answer the phone. Don't pick up if you are out of range to get clear reception.

E-mail

- Include only if you check for messages regularly and if it looks professional. For example, don't include e-mail addresses such as mrgoofyguy@yahoo.com.

Education and training

- Include only post-high school education and training unless pertinent to the position.
- Be sure to include seminary and university names, cities, degrees, majors and graduation dates.
- May also include academic honors, related coursework, study abroad

Skills and experience

- Elaborate on your paid and unpaid work experiences to making you stand out from other applicants
- Be sure to include your job title, the name and location of where you worked, and the dates you were employed.
- Each position should include 3-5 bullets, which explain your accomplishments and skills developed at this work setting.
- Describe each accomplishment in a simple, powerful, action statement which must include: a strong verb statement + details (who, what, where, why, how, quantities) + outcome/result.
- Keep statements focused on the skills and experience necessary for the position. Emphasize past results, accomplishments, and level of responsibility

Additional Optional Categories to Consider

Job objective

- A job objective is a statement, which specifically states the type of position you are trying to obtain, the type of congregation you would like to work with and the skills you can bring to the position.
- Everything else that you select to place on your résumé should support your job objective.

Summary of qualifications

- A summary is placed near the top of your résumé and includes 3-5 bullet points, which highlight your key qualifications for the position you are applying for.
- It also may include important items which don't fit well anywhere else on a resume.
- Using a summary ensures that call committee sees your key points even if they scan your résumé quickly.
- Summaries should be brief and very focused.

Volunteer experience

- Volunteer experience can be elaborated in the same way as work experience, or you can simply list where you volunteered and the dates.

Outside interests

- Résumés can include memberships and involvement in various organizations, but be sure to keep it professional.
- These also can be elaborated on like work experience or simply listed including the organization, your position (if appropriate), and the dates of involvement.

Awards and honors

- Name the award and date received. Can include academic/non-academic achievements.

Professional affiliations

- Include any professional memberships, which relate to your job objective.

The above information was adapted from the following website:
<http://careerservices.class.umn.edu/students/workopportunities/resume/basics.html>

Writing a Job Description – (Attachment G)

(Sample Job Description)

_____ Lutheran Church

Title: Pastor of Youth Ministries

Basic Function and Responsibility:

Serves as a member of the pastoral staff with an emphasis in leading
_____ Lutheran Church youth ministries and events

Characteristic Duties and Responsibilities:

This person shall

- 1) Regularly pray for the congregation and its ministry
- 2) Support a youth evangelism program by:
 - a) encouraging and aiding in the development of spiritual growth in the lives of all young people whether they are seekers, believers, disciples and/or leaders
 - b) exploring ways to bring youth into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and help them find avenues to strengthen and deepen their faith
 - c) serving as a resource for other congregations seeking to develop a vibrant youth ministry
 - d) increasing the fellowship opportunities for youth
- 3) Participate and coordinate a discipleship program for youth by
 - a) developing spiritual retreats and events for youth
 - b) playing a role in the teaching of Confirmation classes
 - c) teaching Sunday school youth classes
 - d) leading Bible studies
 - e) teaching Vacation Bible School classes
- 4) Teach and promote biblical stewardship for youth in areas of spiritual gifts and possessions and provide input for the benevolence ministry
- 5) Encourage youth participation in a variety of social ministries
- 6) Supervise youth ministries and events in collaboration with the chairperson of the Youth Ministry Team and members of the Youth Ministry Team
- 7) Collaborate with the young adult coordinator in the development of transitional activities for movement from youth ministries to young adult ministries
- 8) Aid in congregational worship by:
 - a) Possessing and developing a positive public presence through various skills in worship (both *Lutheran Book of Worship* and alternative worship) in the areas of preaching, worship leadership and hospitality
 - b) Preaching at least twice monthly (at least one Saturday evening and Sunday morning and/or Sunday evening)
 - c) Exploring worship opportunities for youth

9) Perform other duties as assigned by the Senior Pastor.

Reporting Relationship: To the senior pastor

Supervision Exercised: None

Organizational Outline: pastor of youth ministries, senior pastor, church council,
_____ congregation

Desired Personal Characteristics:

- 1) Strong Christian walk demonstrated by regular worship, Bible study and fellowship
- 2) Strong communication skills with groups and one-on-one contact through phone calling and personal meetings
- 3) Personal computer skills to support creation of communication pieces in a variety of media forms
- 4) Desire to grow and learn by seeking out and applying new ideas from reading, studying and talking with others serving in a similar capacity
- 5) The willingness to participate in ongoing training for the youth ministry
- 6) Desire to work as a team member to further the mission of _____ Lutheran Church which is "to make Christ known to all people, aiding them to become baptized believers, equipping them to become committed disciples of Christ and inspiring them to become Christian servant-leaders in God's church and world"

Minimum Qualifications (education/experience):

This pastor will have a master of divinity degree from an accredited Lutheran seminary and complete the requirements as outlined in the congregational bylaws.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Required:

It is expected that this person have the general personal characteristics, skills and abilities as outlined above. At the same time, a call issued to the pastor of youth ministries will also be influenced by the direction of the Holy Spirit, a candidate's personality in relating to others in a team situation, and a candidate's passion and effectiveness in the areas of evangelism, worship, education, stewardship, social ministry and administration.