

**EASTERN SYNOD**  
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CANADA



## **Anniversary of Call Ministry Review**

The months leading toward the anniversary of a call to ministry can provide welcome opportunities for celebration, reflection and learning. It is an appropriate time for the pastor and the congregation to review the past, and make fresh commitments.

This model for evaluating mutual ministry will help you review the expectations and leadership needs of your congregation and the ministry of your pastor. Significant things have happened during the past months. Expectations have changed. New opportunities for ministry are open. Fresh commitments are possible.

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## **Participants**

Those who will initially participate in this evaluation process are the pastor(s) and the congregational Mutual Ministry Committee. If your congregation does not have a Mutual Ministry Committee, the congregational council should appoint a group of four to six persons who are committed to mutual ministry to participate in the review process.

## **Materials**

Every participant involved in this evaluating process should have a copy of this guide. Also, copies of the OFFICIAL CALL TO A PASTOR and other appropriate background materials listed in Step 1 below should be available to participants. You will also need sheets of newsprint and felt tip markers, or a chalkboard and chalk.

## **Steps in Evaluating Mutual Ministry Using This Selection Model**

**Step 1.** Review background materials.

**Step 2.** Answer the question, “*Where are we now - 12/24 or 36 months after calling our new pastor?*”

**Step 3.** An interview with your pastor.

**Step 4.** Identify ways to strengthen your ministry together.

**Step 5.** Develop three specific strategies which will strengthen your ministry.

## **Leadership**

Participants can determine who will serve as leader or facilitator. One person can serve as leader for the entire process, or a different person can be responsible for each step.

## **Time and Timing**

The most appropriate time to make use of this review process would be in and around the anniversary of a pastor’s call to minister within the congregation. The entire review process usually takes from four to six hours.

## Step 1

### *Review Appropriate Background Materials*

A baseline is necessary for effective evaluation. Begin by looking at whatever background materials were used at the time of the selection of the pastor(s). You can establish your baseline by doing the following:

1. Prepare copies of all appropriate background materials such as:
  - material used in the vacancy study or search process
  - OFFICIAL CALL TO A PASTOR
  - job description and any written expectations
  - congregation's constitution
  - mission statement or long-range goals for the congregation
  - material from any previous evaluation
2. Prior to any discussion, provide all participants with copies of the appropriate background materials so they can review all materials thoroughly.
3. Set aside adequate time for dialogue, clarification, and identification of common themes.  
Remember, this was "what was said then". Perceptions may have been incorrect. Expectations may have been unclear. The situation may have changed. Nevertheless, review the materials and identify what were the stated expectations at that time. This review may take a brief time or it may take several hours.
4. Avoid discussion of what is the present situation. That will come in *Step 2*.
5. Once your group has a common understanding of what was said in the past, then you are ready to analyse "where we are now".

## Step 2

### *Where Are We Now?*

Write individual responses to the following four items in the space provided then share with the group.

1. List the three most exciting or significant things that occurred in your congregation during the time period being evaluated.
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
2. List the three most disappointing or frustrating things that occurred in your congregation during the time period being evaluated.
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
3. What are the three most productive, meaningful, or appreciated aspects of your pastor(s) ministry?
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
4. What are the three most misunderstood, least appreciated, or least helpful aspects of your pastor(s) ministry?
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.

### Step 3

#### *An Interview With Your Pastor*

An interview with your pastor can be very valuable. It is time for debriefing, for learning any details that may have been unknown, and for hearing reflections of the pastor about the parish and its mission. This is a time for the group to listen and learn. It is not a time for the group to share responses. Have a member of the groups serve as a recorder.

- What were your initial expectations when you began to work with us?  
How have they turned out?
- What five areas of your work have given you the sense of greatest fulfillment?
- What were your five areas of greatest frustration?
- How do you view the next ten years of this congregation's life?  
What do you see to be its options and obstacles?
- What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of this congregation?
- What do you consider your strengths and weaknesses are?

## Step 4

### *Ways to Renew Our Ministry Together*

1. Individually write down three different endings to the following sentences :

**In light of our review of the background materials and our analysis of where we are now, I think that we could renew our ministry together by:**

a.

b.

c.

**NOTE:** These suggestions should not be seen as criticisms, but as areas for renewing effective ministry for the future.

2. On newsprint or chalkboard list everyone's suggestions.
3. After all suggestions have been shared and recorded, identify the suggestions which are similar or closely related.
4. On newsprint or chalkboard write five or six suggestions which summarize the thinking of your group.
5. From this list of five or six suggestions, identify the three suggestions that will most likely renew your ministry together. At this point in evaluating, both understanding and consensus would be helpful. You can't do everything at once. Therefore, start by identifying those three items which are most needed and most likely to bring renewed effectiveness and commitment to the ministry expectations and opportunities.

God provides many opportunities for ministry. You have selected three areas with which to begin. Others may be developed later.

## Step 5

### *Specific Strategies for Renewing Our Ministry*

Develop specific strategies for renewing your ministry by doing the following:

1. Complete the worksheet that accompanies this guide. It is important to be specific about the what, why, who and when of your strategies. Working with other participants, develop three specific strategies that will renew your ministry together.
2. Make sure every member of the Mutual Ministry Committee has a copy of the final strategies.
3. Share your strategies with your Congregational Council.
4. Implement the strategies that you have outlined.
5. Use these identified strategies for ongoing reference in your ministry together. Review these strategies often and make use of them in determining the form of subsequent Ministry Reviews.

**WORKSHEET FOR STEP 4**  
*Our Strategies for Renewing Our Ministry*

<b>WHAT?</b>  What is our strategy?	<b>WHY?</b>  Why do we need this? How will our ministry be renewed?	<b>WHO?</b>  Who will be involved? In what way?	<b>WHEN?</b>  When do we start? When do we evaluate our effectiveness?
1.			
2.			
3.			