



EASTERN SYNOD of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

CALL PROCESS MANUAL

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1A. HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

There is a lot of material in this manual, and it may seem a little overwhelming at first! Start by familiarizing yourself with the Table of Contents and then review the Overview of the Call Process (*Section 1b*) and the Sample Timeline for the Call Process. (*Section 1c*)

Members of the Congregational Council should receive copies of the Table of Contents and Sections 1-6, but they do not need copies of all the material in the appendix.

Members of the Call Committee should receive copies of the Table of Contents and Sections 1, 3 and 4.

The chairperson of Council and the chairperson of the Call Committee should receive copies of the entire manual.

Remember, if you have any questions about the manual or about the process, please contact your staff advisor at the synod office.

1B. AN OVERVIEW OF THE CALL PROCESS

- (a) When the pastor submits a letter of resignation, the chairperson of the congregation contacts the Bishop by phone, letter, or e-mail to initiate the call process.
- (b) The Assistant to the Bishop, responsible for call processes, contacts the Dean of the Conference, in which that congregation is located, instructing him/her to meet with the Congregational Council to initiate the call process. Letters are sent to the Council President and Pastor, informing them that the Conference Dean will initiate this contact. (Copies of the Exit Interview format and Transitional Document Review form will be included.)
- (c) The Dean of the Conference schedules a meeting with the Council to oversee an exit interview between the pastor and Church Council (*Section 2c*), facilitate a transitional document review with the pastor and Church Council (*Section 2e*), and review the Eastern Synod call process.
- (d) The congregation prepares to say goodbye to their pastor. (*Section 2*)
- (e) The Bishop, in consultation with the Council, appoints an interim pastor.
- (f) The Congregational Council prepares the Congregational Mission Profile and appoints a Call Committee. (*Sections 3b and 3c*)
- (g) The Bishop, or his/her representative, meets with the Church Council and Call Committee to review the Congregational Mission Profile and develop a list of no more than six names for consideration for call. The Bishop's Assistant will solicit Availability for Call forms from those on the list and forward them to the Call Committee. (*Section 3d*)
- (h) The Call Committee reviews the Availability for Call forms that are submitted and creates a short list of no more than three names for interviewing. The Bishop's Assistant is informed of those who are being short-listed.
- (i) The Call Committee contacts the individuals on the interview list by letter, inviting them for an interview and attaching a copy of the Congregational Mission Profile and the most recent Annual Report of the congregation. The letter will also request, where applicable, a copy of the most recent Annual Report of the congregation where the pastor is presently serving. (*Section 4b*)

- (j) The letters are followed up by phone calls and interviews are arranged. (*Section 4b*)
- (k) Interviews take place. (*Section 4c*)
- (l) Once a decision has been made on whom the committee wishes to recommend for call, the Call Committee informs synod office of their decision.
- (m) The Call Committee formally presents its recommendation to the Congregational Council. The Council votes on the recommendation. If the vote is positive, Council prepares the compensation package with assistance from synod office. A call meeting date is set. (*Sections 4d and 5a*)
- (n) The Call Committee contacts all other candidates, in writing, to inform them a recommendation has been made and to thank them for participating in the search process. (*Section 4e*)
- (o) In preparation for the call meeting, the Council Chair/President will inform the Bishop's Assistant of the particulars of the call. The Bishop's Assistant will see to the preparation of the call documents and forward them in time for the call meeting.
- (p) The call meeting takes place. (*Section 5b and 5c*) If the vote is positive, a call is extended. Members of Church Council sign the Letter of Call which is then returned to the Bishop's office. If the vote is defeated, the Council returns to step g.
- (q) The Letter of Call is issued to the new pastor, who has 30 days to respond.
- (r) If the pastor accepts the call, a start-date and moving details are negotiated with the Council. (*Section 6*) An installation date is negotiated between the Pastor, the Dean of the Conference, and the Council.
- (s) The new pastor attends the next Eastern Synod Transitions Workshop, a part of the annual Luther Hostel continuing education event.

1C. A SAMPLE TIMELINE FOR THE CALL PROCESS

<i>TIME</i>	<i>TASK</i>
<i>0</i>	The pastor submits a letter of resignation.
<i>Week 1</i>	The chairperson of the congregation contacts the Bishop to initiate the call process. The Bishop requests the Conference Dean to meet with the Congregational Council.
<i>Week 2-3</i>	The Conference Dean meets with the Council to review the call process and deliver a copy of the Eastern Synod Call Process Manual is sent to the congregation.
<i>Week 4-6</i>	Council prepares the Congregational Mission Profile and appoints a Call Committee. An Interim pastor is appointed.
<i>Week 8</i>	The Bishop's Assistant meets with the Council and Call Committee to review the Congregational Mission Profile and develop a list of names for consideration for call. The Bishop solicits Availability for Call forms from those on the list for forwarding to the Call Committee chairperson.
<i>Week 11</i>	The Call Committee reviews the Availability for Call forms and creates a short list of persons who will be invited for an interview. The Call Committee contacts the individuals on the interview list by letter.
<i>Week 11</i>	The letters are followed up by phone calls and interviews are arranged.
<i>Week 14</i>	Interviews take place.
<i>Week 15</i>	The Call Committee contacts Synod Office with a recommendation they are prepared to make to Council.
<i>Week 16</i>	The Council votes on the recommendation and prepares the compensation package with assistance from synod office. A call meeting date is set.
<i>Week 17</i>	The Call Committee informs other candidates that a recommendation has been made and thanking them for participating in the process.
<i>Week 20</i>	The call meeting takes place. If the vote is positive, a call is extended.
<i>Week 24</i>	When a call is extended, the pastor has 30 days to respond to the call.
<i>Weeks 32-36</i>	Once a call is accepted, the new pastor takes residence, usually within 60 days. The new pastor is installed.

1D. CHECKLIST FOR THE CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

Starting the Call Process

- Contact the Bishop by phone or letter to initiate the call process.
- Schedule a meeting with the Conference Dean to begin the call process.
- Meet with the Conference Dean, at which time he/she will oversee an exit interview between the pastor and Church Council (*Section 2c*), facilitate a transitional document review (*Section 2e*), and provide an overview of the Eastern Synod call process.
- Complete the Congregational Mission Profile and send it to the synod office.
- Appoint a Call Committee.
- Authorize funds for the work of the Call Committee, such as travel and interview expenses.
- Arranging a meeting with the Bishop's Assistant and the Council / Call Committee to review the Mission Profile.

Saying Farewell and Interim Ministry

- Consult with the Bishop for the appointment of an interim pastor.
- Arrange a farewell for the pastor who is leaving.
- Hold an exit interview with the pastor who is leaving.
- Disband the current mutual ministry committee and thank them for their work.

Completing the Call Process

- Meet with the Call Committee to hear their recommendation for call.
- Vote on the recommendation.
- Inform Synod Office of your decision.
- Prepare the compensation package with assistance from Synod Office.
- Set a call meeting date in consultation with Synod Office.
- Announce the call meeting date to the congregation.
- Hold the call meeting. (See *Appendix 14*)
- Arrange for the installation of the new pastor in consultation with the pastor and Conference Dean. Inform synod office.
- Work with the pastor to appoint a new mutual ministry committee.
- Support and encourage the pastor to attend the Eastern Synod Transitions or First Call Workshop.

1E. CHECKLIST FOR THE CALL COMMITTEE

Starting the Process

- Appoint a chairperson and secretary.
- Review the completed Congregational Mission Profile.
- Meet with the Bishop's Assistant to develop a list of no more than six names for consideration for call.

Selecting and Interviewing Candidates

- Review the Availability for Call forms that are submitted.
- Create a short list of no more than three names for interviewing.
- Write letters to candidates you are not interviewing.
- Contact the individuals on the interview list by letter, inviting them for an interview.
- Follow up letters with phone calls and arrange interviews.
- Prepare for interviews.
- Conduct interviews.
- Reimburse candidates for expenses.

Making a Recommendation and Wrap-up

- Decide on a candidate to recommend to Congregational Council.
- Inform Synod Office of your decision.
- Collect and destroy the Availability for Call documents of all individuals who participated in the call process. Also, if any audio or video tapes of candidates have been employed, these also should be collected and destroyed.
- Meet with Congregational Council to make your recommendation.
- Write to candidates who were interviewed but who are not being considered for call.
- Attend the congregational meeting prepared to answer questions about the candidate.

1F. CHECKLIST FOR THE CONFERENCE DEAN

Starting the Process

- Once informed, by the Bishop's office, of an impending vacancy, contact the Council president/chairperson to schedule a meeting with the Church Council.
- You will receive a copy of the Eastern Synod Call Manual from synod office.
- At the meeting with the Council, oversee an exit interview between the pastor and Church Council (*Section 2c*), facilitate a document review with the pastor and Church Council (*Section 2e / Appendix 15-B*), and review the Eastern Synod call process. A sample agenda for this meeting is included in *Appendix 15-A*.

Further questions, which you cannot answer or which the Council or Call Committee may have at any time, should be directed to the Assistant to the Bishop who is responsible for call processes.

- Complete the Transitional Document Review (*Appendix 15-B*), and a Record of Expenses. Submit these to the Bishop's Assistant.

Completing the Call Process

- Once a Pastor has accepted a Call, work with the Pastor and Church Council to schedule an appropriate installation date.
- Preside at the installation of the new Pastor.
- Submit final expense report.*

* for both the initial meeting with Church Council and in presiding at the installation, Conference Deans are paid \$ 125 plus expenses. Mileage is paid as per the rate for synodically authorized business.