The Transition Process –
“A Spirit-led Time of Renewal”

Southwestern Texas Synod
Transition Process Handbook
For Church Councils

Version 2: 03/04/13
Table of Contents

Letter from the Bishop .......................................................... 3
The Spiritual Work of the Transition Process ......................... 4
Congregational Council Checklist .......................................... 6
Frequently Asked Questions .................................................. 7
Transition Process Summary .................................................. 8

Steps in the Transition Process
Step 1: Pastor Consultation with Bishop ................................. 9
Step 2: Congregation Council Accepts the Pastor’s Letter of Resignation ................................................. 9
Step 3: Congregation Council, Pastor and Secretary complete all obligations ................................................. 9
Step 4: Conduct exit interview with resigning pastor .................. 10
Step 5: Plan farewell event; clarify new relationship with departing pastor .................................................... 10
Step 6: Appoint an Interim Pastor ........................................... 11
Step 7: Establish a Call Committee ........................................... 11
Step 8: Office of the Bishop meets with Council, Call Committee; Congregational Event set .......................... 12
Step 9: “Spirit Led Time of Renewal” Congregational Event ................................................................. 12
Step 10: “Healthy Congregations Workshop # 1" ....................... 12
Step 11: Ministry Site Profile .................................................. 12
Step 12: Time of Intentional Prayer and Discernment ............... 13
Step 13: Interviewing Candidates and Identifying the Primary Candidate ...................................................... 13
Step 14: The Vote of Council on Candidate, Compensation Package ......................................................... 13
Step 15: The Vote of the Congregation on Candidate, Compensation Package .......................................... 14
Step 16: Installation ............................................................... 16

The Call Process for 2nd Pastor, Consecrated, Commissioned Rostered Leaders

Southwestern Texas Synod Office Contact Information

APPENDICES

1 Prayers, Scripture and Bible Studies ..................................... 17
2 “Ethics... A Sensitive Matter” .............................................. 20
3 Letter of Agreement .......................................................... 21
4 Bulletin Insert on Call Process ............................................. 22
5 Audit of Parochial Records ................................................. 23
6 Certification of Financial Obligations .................................. 24
7 Exit Interview (Pastor) ....................................................... 25
8 Interim Pastor Report Form (CC) ......................................... 26
9 Interim Pastor Report Form (BO) ......................................... 27
10 Interim Pastor Guidelines ................................................... 28
11 Call Committee Report Form ............................................. 30
12 121 Call Committee Installation .......................................... 31
13 Compensation Worksheets ............................................... 32
14 Letter of Call (sample) ...................................................... 34
15 Healthy Congregations Brochure ........................................ 35

2
Dear Congregational Leaders:

The Scriptures abound with stories of how the Holy Spirit is at work calling leaders into positions of responsibility and trust. You are now involved in a time of trusting the will of God for your congregation as you begin this period of prayerful discernment. There is no reason to be in a hurry because God is with you and the congregation during this time of leadership transition. God is with you healing old wounds, guiding and renewing you towards a new future, and walking closely by your side as you witness and serve in Christ’s name.

This Transition Process Handbook represents our best wisdom in how we as a synod work together faithfully with congregations, Councils and Call Committees to assist you in finding and calling the right person to be your next pastor.

The staff and I believe strongly that this is indeed A Spirit-Led Time of Renewal. We will share our time and energy with you from the very beginning of this process because we are thankful to be in partnership with you in ministry and mission. We will pray for you and for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in this Call Process. If you have any questions, please feel free to give us a call.

May God bless you in this Spirit-led time of renewal.

Faithfully in Christ,

[Signature]

The Rev. Dr. Ray Tiemann
Bishop
THE SPIRITUAL WORK OF THE TRANSITION PROCESS

Introduction
The time of calling a pastor can be a special time for reflection and prayer in the life of a congregation. This time of transition is an opportunity for the Council to provide encouragement, trust in God, unity and spiritual growth. Prayer, Bible study, and regular devotions keep the leadership spiritually centered as it guides the congregation in grieving its loss, assessing the current congregational strengths and weaknesses, creating a vision for mission and ministry, and calling a new pastor.

Prayer, Bible Study, Devotions and Theological Reflection are tools that will help you as you move through the Call Process. With these tools a congregation learns not only the mechanics of the Call Process but also the spiritual nature of what is happening. There are suggested resource materials in Appendix 1. Here is your spiritual work:

1. Begin with prayer every time members of the Congregation gather.
2. Regularly include reflections in newsletters, bulletins and the congregational website that tell of the Call Process and invite people into a deeper understanding of Call.
3. In church during worship, during meetings, in bulletins, as part of announcements, in newsletters and on the website, there should be regular communication of the Call Process and invitations to pray. All of the places that communicate the work of the Congregation are opportunities for sharing the Call Process and inviting people into a process of spiritual growth.
4. The whole community needs to always be in prayer. During this process the prayer is focused on the Call Process as well as the other community concerns. Every group and committee should be furnished with information about the Call Process and be asked to share in this spiritual work.
5. The Leadership begins its meetings with Bible study, devotions and prayer before beginning its various tasks. The Leadership should also provide suggested prayers, biblical material and other devotional materials to other groups in the congregation.

Understanding "Call"
WHAT THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION SAYS:
The Lutheran Church looks to the documents called "The Lutheran Confessions" for its understanding of scripture, the faith and the church. Chief among these documents is the Augsburg Confession, written by Martin Luther and other reformers in the city of Augsburg (Germany) in 1530. These short, concise statements help us understand the nature of the office of ministry in the Lutheran Church:

"We cannot obtain forgiveness of sin and righteousness before God by our own merits, works or satisfactions. We receive forgiveness of sin and become righteous before God by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith, when we believe that Christ suffered for us and that for his sake our sin is forgiven and righteousness and eternal life are given to us."
(Article IV, The Augsburg Confession)

"To obtain such faith God instituted the office of the ministry, that is, provided the Gospel and the sacraments. Through these he gives the Holy Spirit, who works faith, when and where he pleases, in those who hear the Gospel."
(Article V, The Augsburg Confession)

"Nobody should publicly teach or preach or administer the sacraments in the church without regular call." All Christians are called to the ministry of serving God and neighbor, but for the sake of good order in the church certain Christians are specially called to the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament."
(Article XIV, The Augsburg Confession)
THE CALL TO MINISTRY
It is through the Church that God calls some Christians to ordained ministry. Once that Call is discerned, the candidate devotes years to study, training and preparation under the guidance of the whole Church through the Bishop and the Candidacy Committee.
In a similar way, it is through the Church that God calls ordained ministers to a specific pastorate. Not only does the local congregation participate in the Call Process, but so does the whole Church through the office of the Bishop. Just as the whole Church took an active role in the Call to ordination, so now the whole Church takes an active role in the Call to a specific ministry.

This is shown in the fact that once a person is approved for ordination, the candidate must receive and accept a call to a specific ministry in order to be ordained. Ordination may occur in a local church, but it is always an ordination by the whole Church as shown in the presence of the Bishop at the ordination service.

THE CHURCH AND CALL
The local church is fully the Church, but the local church is not all the church there is. The local church calls a person to be its pastor, but the whole Church has a stake in who is called and how the Call Process is handled. The Call Committee, the Council and, eventually, the entire congregation participate fully in the process. But so does the Bishop, who represents both the interest and the commitment of the whole Church in seeing that the Pastor-called is suited to ministry under the Call that is extended.

The Bishop has a deep concern for the well being of the congregation’s life and ministry. The Bishop also has a deep concern for the person and gifts of the prospective pastor. In the Call Process the Bishop, the Congregation and the prospective pastor work together with the guidance of the Holy Spirit to bring about a new partnership that is faithful to the Gospel, empowers the local church in its ministry, and strengthens the whole Church as people of God.

WHAT IS A "CALL"?
On the basis of our Lutheran theology, a pastor is called, not hired, to serve a congregation. The Call Process is not the same as the hiring process in other parts of society. Any process that seems to focus on “head hunting,” résumé shuffling, or high anxiety interviews is missing the point in the calling of a pastor. A call is one element in the Church’s seeking and following God’s movement into the future.

The Call Process is not a pageant, in which contestants present themselves to their best advantage so they will be the winners. The Lutheran Call Process is unique because it is an effort to discern what God wants for the local church and for the whole Church in order that the Gospel may be proclaimed and the sacraments administered in accordance with the Gospel.

In order for a call to be issued there must be first a congregational vote for the candidate, second the President and Secretary of the Congregation must sign The Letter of Call representing the Congregation’s decision and finally the Bishop must sign The Letter of Call representing the whole Church.
### Congregational Council Check List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accept Pastor’s letter of resignation, notify congregation in writing, copy synod office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schedule farewell event for Pastor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Congregational Council, Pastor and Council secretary complete all obligations, copy synod office</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Audit of Parochial Records</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Certification of Financial Obligations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarify new relationship with departing Pastor – complete Letter of Agreement – notify congregation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meet with Office of Bishop to appoint an interim Pastor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do exit interview with Pastor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elect/Appoint Call Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Install Call Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>With Call Committee, schedule congregational event*</td>
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<tr>
<td>With Call Committee, schedule Healthy Congregations Workshop 1 training</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Schedule Healthy Congregations Workshop 2* (generally 2 months or so after WS 1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Receive name of Primary Candidate from Call Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Call Chair, President of Council &amp; candidate discuss compensation package</td>
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<tr>
<td>Council vote to accept candidate 2/3 majority</td>
<td><strong>STOP! YOU MUST COMPLETE THE COMPENSATION FORM AND SEND IT TO THE SYNOD OFFICE FOR REVIEW BEFORE YOU CAN CONTINUE PAST THIS POINT!</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set date for congregational vote 2 weeks written notice to members</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact synod for synod representative to attend Call meeting /ask for Carrie Blank</td>
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<tr>
<td>Synod office mails official Call documents / given to Congregation President</td>
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<tr>
<td>Congregational vote 2/3 to accept candidate / Simple majority for compensation package</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immediately contact candidate with results of the Congregational vote</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mail signed call papers to synod office /forward to candidate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Receive acceptance / rejection of Call from candidate (up to 30 days)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Upon acceptance of Call contact your Conference Dean / set up installation date &amp; time</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule Healthy Congregations Workshop 3*</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Optional, but strongly recommended

### Remember:

Stay calm, follow the process, keep your congregation and the Synod office informed of progress!
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TRANSITION PROCESS

How long will it take to find a pastor?
Every Call Process varies in length. Once the Call Committee begins its work, it will normally take between 6 months and 1 year, but some last longer. The length of the process depends on the number of candidates interviewed; the time call committee and candidates have available for conversation, and the needs of the congregation for grieving and preparation for the next pastor.

What will the congregation do during this time of transition regarding pastoral leadership?
In a pastoral vacancy, the Office of Bishop, in consultation with the Congregation Council, will appoint an Interim Pastor who will, at a minimum, lead worship/preach (or arrange for this leadership) weekly, meet with the Council each month, and provide emergency pastoral care. The responsibilities of the Interim Pastor will vary and may range from a few hours a week to full-time, depending on the availability of the Interim Pastor and the needs of the Congregation. A letter of agreement is signed between the Council and the Pastor that explains exactly what the Interim Pastor will be doing during this time. Sample agreements are available from the Bishop’s Office. Compensation Guidelines are included at back of Manual and can assist with Supply and Interim Leader contracts and compensation.

What are the sources of names provided by the Office of Bishop to the Call Committee?
The names of the candidates come from a variety of places, including:
- Pastors from Southwestern Texas Synod asking to be available for conversation with Call Committees and having submitted their Rostered Leader Profile.
- Pastors from other synods who have asked that their Rostered Leader Profile be shared with congregations in Southwestern Texas. Please note that Candidates from outside Southwestern Texas must be given clearance by their Synodical Bishop to our bishop before they can be considered for an interview.
- Pastors identified by the Bishop and Bishop’s staff as particularly suited for a congregation.
- Recent seminary graduates awaiting their first Call.
- Pastors suggested by members of the Congregation can also be shared with our office to look into as potential candidates.

Will there be Pastors willing to talk with our Call Committee?
The answer is almost always “yes.” In highly specialized situations or in part time ministry opportunities there may be fewer candidates to consider; however, in general, the Holy Spirit is able to bring gifts and needs together.

Should we follow compensation guidelines?
Yes. While not every congregation is able to reach or exceed the recommended figures, the guidelines serve as benchmarks to guide congregations and candidates in helpful conversation regarding what is fair and adequate. If compensation is far below guidelines, fewer candidates may be able to consider the Call to a particular congregation - a part-time Call should be explored. Please refer to Compensation Guidelines for information on Part time calls.

Can we invite the candidates to preach in our congregation on a Sunday morning?
No, we do not suggest that candidates be invited to preach in a congregation where they are being considered. If a candidate preaches in a congregation, the entire congregation becomes involved in the overall process and members are put in the position of deciding on that person’s merit on the basis of worship leadership and one sermon alone, which is only one of many elements of pastoral ministry. The effect is to displace the careful, prayerful discernment of the Call Committee. Call Committees should travel to the Pastor’s congregation or to a neutral site to hear him or her preach. When a Pastor being considered is not presently serving a site the Synod staff can assist in setting up a supply location for him or her to preach and lead worship where the call committee could go to participate in worship.

Should spouses of Call Committee members travel and visit with the Call Committee?
No. It is better for the call committee to travel and interview without spouses since spouses have not been selected to participate in the call process. Committee members need the freedom to interact with complete confidentiality as those chosen to represent the congregation.

Should the congregation expect there to be expenses related to the work of the Call Committee?
Yes. Mileage reimbursement to committee members AND to any candidates who interview with your committee can be expected. The committee may also have receipts for expenses related to meals or refreshments provided. We recommend that you use the standard IRS mileage rate for reimbursement. Often councils will designate the expenses of the Call Committee and the process out of any remainder left in your pastoral compensation package.

Should there be alternate members of the Call Committee?
We do not recommend alternate members; however, if alternates are elected or appointed, they should attend all meetings of the Call Committee and have voice, but should not vote unless a regular member of the Committee finds it necessary to relinquish his or her position.

TRANSITION PROCESS SUMMARY
We believe the transition process for any congregation is a “Spirit-led time of renewal.” Note: most of these steps also pertain to the transition of a lay Rostered leader.

**Step 1.** A Rostered leader always consults with the Office of the Bishop and turns in updated mobility paperwork before engaging in a Call process with another congregation.

**Step 2.** When a Rostered leader accepts a new Call he or she submits a letter of resignation to the Congregational Council at a called Council Meeting; the Letter of Resignation is copied and distributed to the Bishop’s office and to the Congregation along with a letter of acceptance from Council including any plans being made for a farewell event if those are known.

**Step 3.** Pastor and Council complete any obligations to one another (parochial records updated and certified to synod; any financial obligations between Rostered leader and congregation).

**Step 4.** An exit interview for the Rostered Leader led by Congregational Leaders may be helpful.

**Step 5.** Hold Farewell event and clarification of expectations of new relationship of Pastor.

**Step 6.** The Congregational Council works with Bishop’s office for appointment of Interim Pastor.

**Step 7.** The Call Committee is established according to Congregational constitutional provisions.

**Step 8.** The Office of Bishop meets with the Congregational Council and Call Committee, including setting a date for the “Congregational Event.”

**Step 9.** The Office of the Bishop may provide leadership for a “Spirit-led Time of Renewal Congregational Event.”

**Step 10.** The Congregation is asked to set up and participate in “Healthy Congregations” Workshop #1. Workshops #2 & # 3 are highly recommended as follow up for each congregation in call process. Workshop #3 is designed to be done a few months after your new pastor is settled into this new call. See the final Appendix page for the Healthy Congregations brochure and information.

**Step 11.** The Call Committee develops and submits to the Bishop’s office a “Ministry Site Profile” and a compilation of the data collected at the Congregational Event or from the intentional interim process.

**Step 12.** The Office of the Bishop enters into a time of intentional prayer and discernment to find and determine potential candidates to offer your Call Committee for interviews.

**Step 13.** The Call Committee receives names of candidates. The Call Committee interviews candidates, remains in contact with the Bishop’s Office and ultimately recommends a Primary Candidate to the Council.

**Step 14.** The Council votes (2/3 majority) on the recommended Candidate and on a compensation package (simple majority). They recommend the Candidate to the Congregation and set a Congregational meeting date. The Compensation package is then sent to the Bishop’s Office for review.

**Step 15.** Congregation votes (2/3 majority) to extend a call to this pastor, and on a second ballot votes (simple majority) on the compensation package; The Candidate accepts call and notifies congregation and the Office of the Bishop of their start.

**Step 16.** The new Pastor is installed by a representative of the Office of Bishop, normally the Conference Dean, at an agreed-upon time.
STEPS IN THE TRANSITION PROCESS

Step 1: Pastor Consultation with Bishop
In accordance with the Synod constitution (S14.13a), except in the event of the death of the pastor, the Call of a Congregation shall be terminated only following consultation with the Synodical Bishop. Such consultation should include the anticipated date of resignation.

Step 2: Congregation Council accepts the Pastor's Letter of Resignation
When a Pastor resigns, the Congregation Council shall receive the letter of resignation at a called meeting of the Council; copy and distribute it to the congregation along with the Council’s letter announcing the date of departure and any plans for a farewell event. The Council should also immediately notify the Bishop of this Synod (S.13.11). The date of departure should also be reflected in the minutes of the Congregation Council.

(a) Inform the Congregation.
The Congregation Council shall promptly inform all members of the congregation of the Pastor’s resignation. The announcement should be made orally and in writing. An appropriate action would be a letter to all members of the congregation, which includes:
1. that the Congregation Council has accepted the Pastor’s letter of resignation;
2. the last date the Pastor will serve the congregation;
3. expressions of gratitude to the Pastor and family;
4. a copy of the Pastor's letter of resignation;
5. a copy of: “Ethics...A Sensitive Matter.” (See Appendix 2) and/or a signed letter of agreement between the Pastor and the Council, drawing appropriate boundaries on the Pastor’s new relationship with the congregation (See Appendix 3).

In order to keep the congregation informed about what comes next, you may want to use Appendix 4 as a bulletin insert for the next couple of weeks (this insert can also be found at www.swtsynod.org).

(b) Congregation Council reports the vacancy to the Bishop of the Synod
The Congregation Council shall immediately contact the Bishop of the Southwestern Texas Synod to:
1. officially communicate the Pastor’s resignation;
2. include the effective date of the resignation and the date of the last service;
3. deliver copies of the Pastor’s letter of resignation and the Congregation Council’s letter to the congregation.

(c) Contact from the Office of the Bishop
The Office of the Bishop will be available for assistance and support which will include conversations about how to arrange for Supply Pastors to preach/lead worship, potential Interim Pastors, and setting a date for a meeting between the Church Council and the Bishop or the Bishop’s Associate.

Step 3: Congregation Council, Pastor and Congregation Council Secretary complete all obligations

(a) Receive the Parochial Records.
According to the Synod Constitution: The Pastor shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, and shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to this synod (S.14.03).
Upon the Pastor's departure, the Congregation Council Secretary will meet with the departing Pastor to review and receive these records. The parochial records of each congregation shall be kept in a separate book, which shall remain its property. The Secretary of the Congregation shall attest to the Bishop of this Synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing Pastor before:

1. installation in another field of labor, or
2. the issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer (S14.15). A form which may be used to conduct the audit of the congregation's parochial records can be found in Appendix 5. This form may also be used for an annual audit of the Congregation's parochial records.

(b) Settle financial accounts with the resigning Pastor.
A Congregation under financial obligation to its former Pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of the obligation before calling a successor (S13.12). Such financial obligations may include loans on housing, grants, vacation, etc.

In the same manner, any financial obligations of the Pastor to the Congregation shall also be satisfied. (See Appendix 6).

In the event a satisfactory settlement cannot be achieved in either case, the Office of the Bishop shall be called to mediate.

Step 4: Conduct exit interview with Resigning Pastor
When a Pastor accepts a Call to another field of service or retires, the Pastor or Congregation may desire an exit interview. An exit interview is an intentional conversation between the resigning Pastor and the Congregation Council or Mutual Ministry Committee (See Appendix 7). The purposes of the interview are:

(a) to evaluate the ministry;
(b) identify areas of potential growth for Pastor and Congregation;
(c) celebrate the ministry;
(d) clarify the relationship the departing Pastor will have with the congregation.

The Synod constitution states the following: Ordained ministers shall respect the integrity of the ministry of Congregations they do not serve and shall not exercise ministerial functions therein unless invited to do so by the Pastor, or if there is no duly Called Pastor, then by the Interim Pastor in consultation with the Congregation Council. (S14.14). It may be helpful for the Pastor and the Congregation to sign a formal agreement (See Appendix 3).

Step 5: Plan Farewell Event; Clarify New Relationship with departing Pastor
The Congregation Council should plan appropriate expressions of appreciation for the resigning Pastor and his/her family. This thanking and honoring may take several forms, such as:

(a) a service and/or reception which may include invitations to fellow pastors and community leaders,
(b) a seated dinner, or an informal dinner,
(c) a farewell gift.
(d) A special committee should be appointed to recommend the type of event and to coordinate all congregational expressions of appreciation.

After the pastor departs, a reminder should be occasionally inserted in the worship bulletin or parish newsletter similar to this: "While Pastor Smith is still a Pastor he/she is no longer our Pastor. We love and cherish the friendship we have had, but we should not ask for further Pastoral services such as counseling, baptisms, funerals and weddings."

Step 6: Appoint an Interim Pastor
The Bishop is responsible, along with the Congregation Council, for the maintenance of pastoral oversight of the Congregation in the Interim. In order to fulfill this responsibility, the Bishop is authorized to appoint an Interim Pastor during the congregation's pastoral vacancy. The Bishop consults with the Congregation Council about the appointment of the Interim Pastor. The Interim Pastor, a Pastor of the ELCA, may be a retired Pastor, a Pastor in specialized ministry, or a neighboring Pastor. Models of Contracts between Congregations and Interim Pastors are available through the Synod Office.

During service to a congregation:

(a) an Interim Pastor will have the same rights and duties in the congregation of regularly called pastor;
(b) an Interim Pastor may delegate the same in part to a Supply Pastor with the consent of the Bishop of this Synod;
(c) an Interim Pastor, and any ordained minister who may assist, will refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a Pastor;
(d) an Interim Pastor should communicate monthly with the Church Council (See Appendix 8) and regularly with Office of the Bishop (See Appendix 9) as to how the congregation is doing coming to terms with letting go of the past, appreciating current ministries and developing new ones, cultivating new lay leaders, and anticipating the future (i.e., frustrated, excited, optimistic, pessimistic, encouraged, discouraged).

Upon completion of service an Interim Pastor shall certify to the Bishop of this Synod that the parochial records, for the period for which he/she was responsible, are in order. (S14.17). Expanded guidelines for the relationship between the Congregation and the Interim Pastor are listed in Appendix 10.

Step 7: Establish a Call Committee

(a) Purpose of the Call Committee.
   The Call Committee, seeking God's will through prayer, interviews, and visits will recommend a Candidate to the Congregation Council for recommendation to the Congregation. It is important for all who are connected with the process of Calling a Pastor to remember that this is an intensely spiritual experience. As Lutherans we believe that the Holy Spirit illumines and guides the Church, as we are called, through prayer and reflection, to seek God's will in all matters, and certainly in the calling of a new Pastor. Therefore, this matter should be approached with much prayer and spiritual discernment.

(b) Make-up of the Call Committee.
   When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee shall be established according to the Congregation's constitution, normally stated in C13.05. The work of the Call Committee is completed upon Installation of a newly Called Pastor. The appointment of a Call Committee will enable the Congregation Council to administer its normal duties and conduct the business of the congregation.

   In order to best serve the needs of the Congregation, the Committee should be a cross section of the Congregation. Persons named to this Committee should be active members who commune and contribute regularly and who are trusted by the Congregation to make sound decisions. Members of the Call Committee are expected to be faithful in their tasks, present at all meetings, and able to maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality, discernment and maturity. It is recommended that a Chair of the Call Committee be named to lead the meetings and a Secretary be designated to record the actions of the committee. The Chair and the Secretary may be appointed by the Congregation Council or elected by the Committee membership. The Congregation Council will report the Call Committee's membership to the Bishop providing names, addresses, and telephone numbers of committee members, the chair and secretary. (See Appendix 12).
(c) **Announcement of Members.**
The names of the Call Committee members should be published in the bulletin and newsletter. It is also appropriate to post pictures of the committee with contact information on your website/in visible locations. It is appropriate to request prayers and support on the Call Committee's behalf.

(d) **Installation of Call Committee**
The Call Committee may be installed (See Appendix 13).

(e) **Expenses.**
Authorized expenses of the Call Committee should be borne by the Congregation.

**Step 8: Office of the Bishop may meet with Council, Call Committee; Congregational Event is set.**
After the Call Committee is formed the Office of the Bishop will meet with the Council and the Call Committee together to discuss the Call Process. A date for the Congregational event can also be set at this time.

**Step 9: “Spirit Led Time of Renewal Congregational Event”**
The Purpose of this Congregational Event is for the Office of the Bishop and members of the Congregation to have the opportunity to gather with one another to discuss the Call Process and to discover together how God is at work in this Congregation during this Spirit-led Time of Renewal. This work can also be done by an intentional interim, if one has been appointed to serve the congregation. The date for this Congregational Event is set between the Church Council, the Call Committee and the Office of the Bishop. The information shared and collected at this Congregational Event should be collated and distributed to the Office of the Bishop and should be shared publically with the members of the Congregation through the newsletter or regular form of communication. This information becomes part of your Congregational Ministry Site Profile and can be shared with potential Candidates who interview with your Call Committee.

**Step 10: “Healthy Congregations Workshop”**
We have found that congregations participating in Healthy Congregations Workshops truly benefit for the long term of their ministry. We ask each congregation in call process to use the brochure at the end of the Appendices to set up and carry out Workshop #1. A Congregation may set this workshop up independently or may choose to participate in one offered by the Synod. Workshops #2 & #3 are not required but are highly recommended too, and Workshop #3 is designed to be held after the new pastor is called. (See last page of Appendix).

**Step 11: Ministry Site Profile**
When considering the calling of a new Pastor, the Congregation should know its challenges and opportunities for mission and ministry so that the gifts of the Pastor meet the needs of the Congregation. The Ministry Site Profile (MSP) provides the opportunity for the congregation to identify ministry priorities and leadership skills within the congregation. It is important that the profile be a thorough and honest reflection of the community, the congregation, and the congregation’s mission. A similar inventory is used by Pastors to assess their own leadership gifts.

As the Call Committee completes the Ministry Site Profile, it should be in consultation with the Congregation Council or other lay leaders. They can use input from the congregational event, plus any other information collected by congregational leaders.

**Step 12: Time of Intentional Prayer and Discernment**
The Office of the Bishop uses this time to be in intentional prayer for your congregation, your Call Committee and the Rostered Leaders who are in mobility. It is our hope and prayer that we will be led to the best Candidates to offer to your Call Committee for interviews. We also use this time to talk with potential Candidates and to discern together which names to give your Call Committee.

We encourage your Congregation, Council and Call Committee to join us in regular prayer during this time. Sample prayers, Scripture readings and Bible Studies for use during this time are included in Appendix 1.

**Step 13: Interviewing Candidates and Identifying a Primary Candidate**

The work and activities of the Call Committee needs to be confidential at all times. Committee meetings (or interviews) are not open to those who are not on the Call Committee.

The Office of the Bishop will give names of prospective candidates as they are available to the Call Committee with the expectation that the committee will give full consideration to these names and set appointments for interviews. Any other names the Call Committee considers shall be cleared with the Bishop. This is required for all candidates in the Southwestern Texas Synod or any other Synod. Initial Contact with any Candidate is made first by the Office of the Bishop. The interview process is explained in more detail in the Call Committee Handbook.

As the Holy Spirit has guided the Call Committee to a Candidate, the decision to recommend this Pastor to the Congregation Council is typically reached by common consent. If indeed, through prayer and consideration, the Holy Spirit has led the Call Committee to a unanimous decision on a Candidate, this is certainly a time for celebration.

However, if this is not the case, the Call Committee shall vote by secret ballot. The Candidate must receive a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Call Committee for approval.

**Step 14: The Vote of Council on Primary Candidate, Compensation Package**

(a) **Preliminary Compensation Discussions**

When the Call Committee has identified their Primary Candidate, the Committee chair should contact the President of Council/Executive Committee to have preliminary discussions about the Compensation Package. It is prudent to check with the candidate prior to their name being brought forth to Council, to ensure that it is understood what the candidate’s compensation requirements are, and that they are in alignment with likely Council compensation recommendations. The Council President and/or the Call Committee chair has that discussion with the candidate.

(b) **Special Congregation Council Meeting.**

The Council President calls a special meeting of the Council to hear the recommendation of the Call Committee. The chair of the Call Committee presents the name of the Pastor, and may be assisted by other members of the committee. A full report supporting the motion will accompany the recommendation. The Council may also have the opportunity to meet and interview the Candidate.

The following actions must be taken at this special Congregation Council meeting:

1. **Motion to recommend to the Congregation.**
   A motion to recommend the Call of the Pastor to the Congregation will be made, seconded, discussed, and voted on by the members of the Congregation Council. The majority required by vote for the name to be presented to the Congregation is a 2/3 majority.

2. **Compensation Vote.**
The Congregation Council will also determine the compensation package to be recommended to the congregation for its approval (See Appendix 13). This package will carry the agreement of the Pastor to be elected. A simple majority vote of the Congregation Council is needed for presentation of the compensation package to the congregation. Compensation Guidelines are approved by Synod Assembly each year. Please refer to the Current Compensation Guidelines for helpful information.

3. Should the Congregation Council approve the Call Committee's recommendation, the Congregation Council shall call a special meeting of the Congregation. The Congregation Council will establish a date, time and place for the special meeting of the Congregation to vote on the election of the Pastor. Proper arrangements will be made to notify the Congregation of this meeting. Procedures for this aspect of the process are usually stated in the Congregation's constitution. Included in this notice will be the name and brief resume of the Pastor and the compensation package. Prior to sending out this notice, the Candidate will notify their current Congregation Council that they are now a primary candidate for this congregation.

4. Notification to the Bishop.
When the Congregation Council is ready to recommend a Pastor to the Congregation, it will notify the Bishop. The agreed-upon compensation needs to be sent to the Bishop for review prior to the Congregational meeting. The Bishop will normally appoint a member of Synod Council to be present at the meeting of the Congregation.

Step 15: The Vote of the Congregation on Candidate, Compensation Package
(a) Special Congregational Meeting

1. A quorum must be present.
The person presiding at the meeting will determine that a quorum is present according to the Congregation's constitution/bylaws.

2. First Motion: Vote to call the pastor.
At the Congregational meeting, the first motion presented by the Congregation Council is that the congregation vote to call the Pastor. It will be seconded and discussed. The Congregation Council and/or Call Committee will present information about the pastor and how they were led to recommend this call to the congregation.

Only the one name recommended by Council can be voted on at this meeting. The vote shall be by secret written ballot. No absentee or proxy votes shall be accepted (S14.11). The vote to elect is a \( \frac{2}{3} \) vote of those present. As stated in the synod constitution: For issuance of a letter of call to a Pastor or Pastoral Candidate by a Congregation of this Synod in accord with the ELCA constitutional provision 7.41., a two-thirds majority ballot vote shall be required of members of the Congregation present and voting at a meeting regularly called for the purpose of issuing such a Call. (S14.11.B)

The second motion presented by the Congregation Council will be to approve the compensation package (salary, allowances, and other benefits) to be offered to the Pastor-elect. It will be seconded, discussed and voted on by the Congregation. Amendments to the package recommended by the Council can be made by majority vote of the Congregation. The vote needed to approve the compensation package is a simple majority. It may be taken by voice vote, show of hands, or written ballot. It will be noted that if the amounts in the package differ from the approved budget, then a favorable vote, in effect, changes the budget for the year.

(b) The Call is approved by the Congregation.
After the Call has been approved, a personal contact by the President or Vice President of the Congregation will be immediately made with the Pastor called. The following procedure is used to send the official ELCA Letter of Call.
The Bishop’s office will supply a draft of the ELCA Letter of Call with a working copy (See Appendix 14). The President/Vice President of the Congregation is responsible for completing The Letter of Call and sending it to the Office of the Bishop for the Bishop's signature (S.14.11). If the Pastor accepts, the Pastor will return signed copies to the Congregation and the Office of the Bishop. The Pastor will accept or decline the Call within thirty (30) days, unless it is agreed upon otherwise. (S14.12)

(c) The Call is accepted by the Pastor.

The Pastor-elect will set the date when ministry will begin in the new parish. The constitution of the Congregation, which the Pastor is leaving, may require ministry for up to two months beyond the effective resignation, although a period of four-to-six weeks is more common.

The President or Vice-President of the Congregation Council will consult with the Pastor-elect to determine when the acceptance may be publicly announced.

Arrangements for moving will be made between the Pastor-elect and the officers of the Calling Congregation. The Calling Congregation is responsible for moving expenses. In some circumstances, the Pastor-elect and the Congregation may negotiate other arrangements.

(d) The Call is not approved by the Congregation.

In the event that the Call is not approved, the secretary of the Congregation Council will draft a letter to the Candidate Pastor to report officially the results of the Congregational meeting and to conclude the Call process. A personal contact with the Pastor will be made before the letter is sent. The Office of the Bishop will also be immediately notified.

(e) The Call is declined by the Pastor.

In the event that the Pastor does not accept the call, the whole process is to be repeated with another Candidate or Candidates.

(f) Special Situations.

1. **Multiple-Congregation Parish.**
   In the case of a parish with two or more Congregations, each Congregation votes separately on whether or not to Call the Pastor unless their constitution specifies another procedure. If there are not constitutional provisions for number of votes necessary for election, a majority in each parish with 2/3 of all votes cast is necessary for approval. If the Call is approved the Congregations authorize the joint Council to issue the Call and to agree on the salary and other items of support. If one Congregation approves the Call and another does not, the Call is not issued. No part of a joint parish may Call a Pastor without the participation of the other.

2. **Associate/Assistant Pastors.**
   When a Pastor is called to serve in company with another Pastor or Pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each Pastor will be specified in documents that accompany the Call. It is expected that Calls to Associate/Assistant Pastors be "co-terminus" with the Call to the Senior Pastor and that this be specified in the Call. These documents must be drafted in consultation involving the Pastors, the Congregation Council and the Office of Bishop.

3. **Term Calls.**
   A congregation may Call a Pastor for a specific term of years. This departure from the normal rule of permanency must be described in a statement of purpose, which the Bishop must approve.

4. **Dual Calls.**
   A dual Call exists when a married ordained couple serves under a Call to one and the same Congregation or Parish. If one Pastor resigns, dies, or is no longer a Pastor in the dual Call, the Pastorate is declared
vacant, and both Pastors' terms are completed. This provision will be part of the Call document to clergy couples.

5. **Part-time Ministries.**

Part-time ministries are normally defined as a minimum of 20 hours of work each week to qualify as a call. Anyone in Part-time Ministry must be given permission and opportunity to seek additional employment to supplement their income. Please refer to Compensation Guidelines for more details. All arrangement for PT Calls should be discussed with the Bishop beforehand and details need to be in writing.

**Step 16: Installation**

When the process of Calling a Pastor has ended and the Call has been accepted, years of opportunity for growth in Christ lie ahead as the Congregation pursues God's mission through this new ministry partnership. The Office of the Bishop should be contacted to set a date for the Installation of the new Pastor. The Order for the Installation of the Pastor may be found the Occasional Services Book. If additional assistance or a sample service is needed, contact the Office of the Bishop (830-379-9900). Normally the installation will take place by the Conference Dean at a time when local area clergy can participate. A social event may follow the installation service.

The Call Committee's work is completed when a newly Called Pastor is Installed. In those congregations where there is no existing “Mutual Ministry Committee,” the Call Committee can make recommendations and encourage the Congregation Council to form such a committee.

**The Call Process for 2nd Pastors, Commissioned and Consecrated Rostered Leaders – Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses and Diaconal Ministers**

Congregation Councils and Call Committees are encouraged to follow the same process as previously listed for ordained Rostered leaders when Calling a 2nd Pastor or a non-ordained Rostered Leader. All steps may not be required and steps should be adapted to local situation (i.e., person already employed by congregation as lay staff person and becomes rostered.)

Assistance is readily available from the Office of the Bishop to help determine the appropriate process to follow in calling a Rostered leader. (830-379-9900)

**Southwestern Texas Synod Contact Information**

**Address:**
Southwestern Texas Synod, ELCA
1090 Oestreich Dr.
Seguin, TX 78155-3403

**Phone Number:** 830-379-9900
**FAX #:** 830-379-9990
**Website:** www.swtsynod.org

**Email Addresses:**
Bishop Ray Tiemann  rtiemann@swtsynod.org
Bishop’s Associate Sue Briner  sbbriner@swtsynod.org
Mrs. Carrie Blank  cblank@swtsynod.org
APPENDIX 1: Prayers, Scripture and Bible Studies for this Time of Renewal

Prayers

FOR THE WORK OF THE CALL COMMITTEE
Almighty God, giver of all good gifts: Look on your Church with grace and guide the minds of those who shall choose a pastor for this congregation, that we may receive a faithful servant who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FOR THE DEPARTING PASTOR:
Gracious God, you have united us all in one body. We give you thanks for the work of Pastor__________ among us. As he/she leaves to a new call/retirement surround her/him with your Spirit. Give us the courage to release her/him to a new call and bless our remembering of the work that has been done among us. Guide Pastor______________ and us as we continue to seek to share the Good News of salvation through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

DURING THE INTERIM TIME
Loving God, be with us and guide us during this time of discernment. Fill our leaders with your wisdom. Keep us mindful of the work you would have us do. Lead us and guide us O Lord to be about the work of your kingdom even as the search for a new pastor continues. Bless all who have taken on extra responsibility, and fill them with a sense of your love and presence. We pray in your Son’s name, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

DURING INTERVIEWS:
God, keep us mindful of your presence among us as we seek to discern your will for us. We pray that you will help us see beyond our own needs to the needs of your Church. We pray that you will open our eyes to new possibilities, and opportunities of being your people. Guide us and lead us O Lord. Amen.

AT MEETINGS
Life-giving God, create among us a desire to do your will. Open our hearts to your Word. Lead us as we seek to lead. Guide us as we seek to guide. God, we seek a new pastor to be among us to lead us and walk with us into future ministry. Direct and sustain us as we wait. Bless all who serve in the congregation, especially those who have the responsibility to lead us during the Call Process. Bless us Lord Jesus. Amen.
APPENDIX 1: Prayers, Scripture and Bible Studies for this Time of Renewal, cont.

Suggested Biblical Texts

The following are just a few texts that may be used for devotions or bible study during the Call Process. The lessons for each Sunday may also be used for your study.

Matthew 28: 16-20
The Call of Matthew: Matthew 9:9-13
Romans 12: 1-8 (9-21)
I Corinthians 3:1-9
Ephesians 6: 10-18
Philippians 2: 1-11
I Timothy 2: Instructions concerning Prayer
3: 1-7 Qualifications of Bishops
3: 8-13 Qualifications of Deacons
4: 6-16 a Good Minister of Jesus Christ

Reflections on God’s Call:

Call of young people:
   Samuel : I Samuel 2:1- 3:18
   Mary: Luke 1: 26-38
Call of Elderly:
   Elizabeth and Zechariah : Luke 1
   Abraham and Samuel: Genesis 18: 9:15
   Simeon and Anna: Luke 2: 22-38
Call of the Disciples:

Reflections on being the Church:
   Read The Book of Acts together. Read one chapter a week and begin meetings by reflecting on recent readings and the ministry of your congregation.

Reflections on “Wilderness Wandering”
   God’s People waiting for clarity: Numbers 9:15-23
   God’s people grumbling in the wilderness – and God providing: Exodus 16:1-7
A Community Bible Study

LEADER: Open with Prayer:

(Suggestion: Almighty God, we look to your Word for guidance and hope. Open our hearts and our minds that we may hear your word for us. Guide us through your Word to hear the good news for our lives together through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.)

A. One person reads the lesson:
In silence write one word or phrase from the lesson that seems significant:

____________________________________________________________________

Each person shares the word or phrase without additional comment.

B. A second person reads the lesson:
In silence reflect on what this passage is saying to you.
Each person may share her/his reflection without additional comment.

C. A third person reads the lesson:
Each person reflects in one sentence or less what this passage is saying to the Congregation at this time while you are in the Call Process.

If time allows, a 10-20 minute open discussion may be included at this time.

Closing Prayer:
LEADER: Lord God, we are your servants in need of your love.

The leader then offers a prayer for the person on her/his right. That person prays for the person on her/his right, continuing around the room until each person has been included.
Close with the Lord’s Prayer.
APPENDIX 2: “Ethics... A Sensitive Matter”

"Ethics...A Sensitive Matter"

The sensitive matter is of pastors being asked for pastoral acts by people who are their former parishioners. With our synod being as geographically compact as it is, we may face this issue more frequently than other parts of the church.

We start with the acknowledgment that there is no painless way out of an awkward situation. A good pastoral relationship is not coldly functional but is personal, as well, so it's not at all uncommon for people facing a wedding/funeral/baptism/whatever to desire the presence of a pastor who has been personally important in their lives. So you who have been good pastors, and you lay folks who have had good pastors, can expect that those times come when you'd like the pastoral relationship to continue for a special occasion.

That's where we run into troubled water. The professional ethic we need to be clear on is this: When a pastor leaves a parish, he/she is no longer those people's pastor; he may continue to be a friend but the pastoral relationship is ended. The implications are clear: it is often (though not always) appropriate to do what other friends do - attend a wedding or funeral, for instance - but the pastoral act of presiding in those moments belongs to the current pastor.

At times the interim pastor or the new pastor may call on the former pastor to let that pastor know of something happening, or on a few occasions, to say a few words at a funeral, but remember they are no longer the pastor. The responsibility belongs to those of us who have left to make clear that the pastoral relationship is ended.

We want to do what we're trained to do, especially when special people value our doing it; but as clergy who are accountable to each other, and to the whole church for the effective ministry in each place, it is of paramount importance that we do all we can to support the pastoral relationship that is in place.

Former Pastors: Respond automatically by saying, "It's simply not appropriate for me to do that. I'm not your pastor anymore, but I'm glad you consider me a friend. I'd love to come if invited, as your other friends do." But don't say, "You'll have to talk to your pastor about that." That's often said, perhaps thinking that such a response respects the current pastor's role. It doesn't. It puts the current pastor in the no-win situation of acceding to the parishioner's request and relinquishing the pastoral role to you, or saying no and being regarded by the parishioners as cold, jealous, unresponsive and uncaring. Simply say that it's not your role anymore.

Current Pastors: Speak as affirmingly as possible of the relationship your predecessor has had with parishioners, but don't relinquish your pastoral role. Where you feel it's appropriate and healthy, you may invite the previous pastor to participate in a secondary way, but the pastoral role and its responsibilities are yours.

Parishioners: Don't even ask. It immediately puts both the current and former pastor in very awkward positions. Even if a former pastor lives down the block and the current one is someone new that you hardly know, you affirm your former pastor best by inviting him to come while showing high regard for the pastoral office he held by seeking out that new pastor to be your pastor.

This may sound arbitrary and legalistic. We don't mean it to be; we mean it to be pastoral, in the best sense of the word. We all encounter situations we think are "exceptions." We think there are a few of those, but probably a lot fewer than we think at the time.

And then there are more "gray area" kinds of contact with former pastors over personal life struggles, complaints about the life of the parish, etc. But the same principle applies; We are no longer our former parishioners' pastors, and we serve our friends, our former parish, and the whole church best by making that clear and by being highly supportive of our successors. We best honor both their ministry and our own by doing so.

We think most pastors are very clear about these matters most of the time, but we're all human enough that an occasional reminder is probably good for all of us.

(A reprint from Bishop Peter Rogness of the Greater Milwaukee Synod)
APPENDIX 3: Letter of Agreement

Letter of Agreement

This is a Letter of Agreement at the time of retirement/resignation between Pastor ____________ and the congregation council of ____________ Lutheran Church, ____________, Texas. It is a clarification of the former pastor’s role in relationship to this congregation. It is to be shared throughout the congregation so that others may understand changes in responsibilities and can cooperate together as the congregation and former pastor move into another phase of their respective lives.

1. The pastor’s resignation, effective ____________, signifies his/her understanding that all pastoral, priestly, and administrative duties in this congregation are terminated as of that date.

2. It is mutually understood that this termination of responsibilities applies also to the interim period before another pastor is called, since the congregation needs some time and space between pastors to discover who they are now, where they want to go, and with what new leadership. It is agreed that the congregation council will make provision with the bishop for interim pastoral ministry for the congregation.

3. The former pastor agrees that he/she will not officiate or assist at any baptism, wedding, or funeral in this congregation, but may attend as a worshipper on occasion. This is to prevent divided loyalties in the congregation and pressures on either the former or future pastors or interim pastors. The former pastor may be called on as interim or supply pastor in other congregations on occasion.

4. The former pastor agrees that he/she will not continue to make pastoral visits on members of the congregation. Circumstances make it necessary for an exception for limited involvement in the following instances:
   a) ____________________________________________________________________________
   b) ____________________________________________________________________________

5. The former pastor agrees further that if attending this congregation in the future, it will only be as worshipper and participant and that he/she will neither say nor listen to any uncomplimentary or critical remarks in social or other gatherings concerning the interim, past, or future pastors.

6. The former pastor will not do services (wedding, baptism, funeral, etc.) unless it is at the specific initiation and request of the current pastor and/or council (rather than member).

7. If, after approximately one year, there is a desire on the part of the next pastor to review any of the above items, the former pastor pledges to accept the guidance and instruction of the next pastor and congregation council about any participation in the life of ____________ Lutheran Church.

8. The former pastor will remove his/her vestments, equipment, books, and possessions by ____________. All items belonging to the congregation will remain in the congregation. Keys to the buildings will be returned to the church office, no later than ____________.

9. The former pastor will continue serving in the community in the following capacities:
   a) ____________________________________________________________________________
   b) ____________________________________________________________________________

Former Pastor: ________________________ Congregational President: ________________________
APPENDIX 4: Bulletin Insert on the Call Process

The Call Process will result in a new appointment

3. The Council and Call Committee
   through the process of
  will not be created.
   confidential and will not disclose
   and only necessary for the process.

4. The Call Committee will keep
   with candidates.
   other an internal process.
   candidates.

5. The Call Committee will receive
   the names of potential
   candidates.
   who are called to
   your consideration.

6. The Call Committee will receive
   the information packet.
   the Call Committee.

7. The Call Committee will be
   with the internal packet.
   the Call Committee.

8. The Call Committee will make a
   of your name.

9. Your Council will consider
   a call committee.
   and the Call Committee.
   call.

10. The Bishop will receive the
    recommendation of the Council
    and will forward the
    recommendation to the Council.
    the call.

11. The Council will vote on
    the recommendation of the Council.
    the Call Committee.

12. Members of the Call Committee
    the call.

13. The Call Committee will call a
    the Council.
    the Call Committee.

What's next?

The call process will result in a new appointment.

The Council and Call Committee will not be created.

The Call Committee will keep confidential and will not disclose information of the process.

The Call Committee will receive the names of potential candidates.

The Call Committee will receive the information packet.

The Call Committee will make a recommendation.

Your Council will consider a call committee.

The Bishop will receive the recommendation of the Council and will forward the recommendation to the Council.

The Council will vote on the recommendation of the Council.

Members of the Call Committee will call a new appointment.
APPENDIX 5: Audit of Parochial Records

Certification of Congregation Records at the Time of a Pastoral Transition

(To be completed by the secretary of the congregation and submitted to the bishop of the Southwestern Texas Synod)

In anticipation of a pastoral vacancy, \(^1\) I have examined the Parish Register of

___________________________________________
Name of Congregation

___________________________________________
Address of Congregation

___________________________________________
Name of Pastor

and testify that the records have been maintained in good order during the tenure of this pastor, in accordance with the ELCA Model Constitution for Congregations which stipulates, "The pastor shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation, and shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod"\(*C9.12. [1995]\). \(^2\)

___________________________________________
Signature of Congregation Secretary

___________________________________________
Date

1. "The parochial records of each congregation shall be kept in a separate book which shall remain its property. The secretary of the congregation shall attest to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before:
   a. installation in another field of labor, or
   b. issuance of a certificate of dismissal or transfer\([SI4.15.[1995]].\)

2. For a description of the contents of the Parish Register, see "Maintaining the Parish Register."
CERTIFICATION OF
COMPLETION OF ALL FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

All financial obligations, salary, pension, health, death benefits and allowances, together with Continuing Education funds have been met and paid to
Rev. ________________________________

up to the effective date of termination of services. Also, satisfactory settlement of financial obligations has been made by Rev. ________________________________
to the ___________________________ Lutheran Church.

___________________________
Date

___________________________
Pastor

___________________________
Treasurer

Please return this form to:

Southwestern Texas Synod
1090 Oestreich Drive
Seguin, Texas 78155-3403
APPENDIX 7: Exit Interview (Pastor)

Date: ____________________________________________
Congregation’s Name: _______________________________________
Address: ________________________________________________
City/State: _______________________________________________
Zip: ____________ Pastor’s Name: __________________________

1. How would you describe the congregation when you arrived?

2. How would you describe the congregation as you leave?

3. What do you believe has gone particularly well during your leadership?

4. What did not go as well as you had hoped?

5. What are the major strengths of this congregation?

6. What are the major challenges of this congregation?

7. What ministry goals would you suggest for the congregation to strive toward during the next 5 years?

8. What other comments would you like to share?

9. What information from this exit interview should be shared, and with whom?
APPENDIX 8: Interim Pastor Report Form (Church Council)

Report of the Interim Pastor to the Church Council

For the month of ______________________

Worship services led ___________ @ __________ per service.
   Baptisms ___________
   Weddings ___________
   Memorial Services ___________
   Funeral Services ___________

Children’s sermons ___________

Confirmation classes ___________

Visits made to members _______ non-members _______

Home communions ___________

Telephone contacts ___________

Counseling ____________ Contacts ____________

Meetings attended ___________

New members received _______

Miles driven ___________ @ _____ cents per mile

**Total** number of hours worked _______ @ ______ per hour:

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Signed ____________________________ Date _______________


APPENDIX 9: Interim Pastor Report Form (Bishop’s Office)

INTERIM MINISTRY REPORT

Pastor’s Name:
Name of Church:
Date:

WORSHIP: What is your view of the atmosphere at worship services?:

WORSHIP: What is happening to worship attendance?:

STEWARDSHIP: Describe Mission Support/Offerings this past month.: 

ISSUES: What conflicts or changes have you been working with this month/period?:

SUPPORT: Are you receiving support from the church council?:

SUPPORT: Are you receiving support from the members:

SUPPORT: Are you receiving support from the pastors?:

CONCERNS: Any contributing comments you have regarding the previous pastor?:

CALL PROCESS: At one point do you think the congregation will begin the call process?:

CALL PROCESS: Have you been asked to be the next pastor?:

CALL PROCESS: If so, how have you handled it?:

SATISFACTION: What has pleased you the most in your ministry this month?:

OTHER: Please comment on anything else you think the bishop should know.:
APPENDIX 10: Interim Pastor Guidelines  
Southwestern Texas Synod -Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

I. The Interim Pastor has all the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly Called Pastor (S14.17).
   A. Special ministerial acts (i.e. baptisms, weddings, funerals, administration of communion, etc.) shall be arranged with the Interim Pastor's approval.
   B. Pulpit supply, if not done by the Interim Pastor, shall involve the Interim Pastor's counsel.
   C. Confirmation instruction shall also involve the interim pastor's guidance.
   D. Notices of the meeting of the Congregation Council and minutes shall be sent to the interim pastor. The Interim Pastor is expected to attend Council meetings and submit a monthly report. “During the period of service, an Interim Pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly Called Pastor...” *C9.07. Model Constitution
   E. The secretary of the Congregation Council in consultation with the Interim Pastor is responsible for the parish register.
   F. The Interim Pastor is to refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a Pastor.
   G. It is not recommended that the Interim Pastor be Called as a Pastor of the Congregation being served.

II. The Congregation Council and Interim Pastor shall agree upon the ministry to be provided by the Interim Pastor.
   This agreement will normally address the following areas:
   A. The frequency of the Interim Pastor's responsibility in handling the affairs of the congregation.
   B. The extent of the Interim Pastor's responsibilities in providing pastoral care in the parish.
   C. The ministerial acts for which the Interim Pastor will be responsible.
   D. The Interim Pastor's responsibility relating to administration.
   E. The procedure of how to reach the interim pastor in the case of a parish emergency.
   F. The role of the Interim Pastor in catechetics.
   G. The Congregation Council shall arrange to handle the areas of congregational life not covered by the Interim Pastor.
   H. The Interim Pastor's schedule and responsibilities shall be described in writing and communicated to the congregation, sample agreements are available from the Bishop's Office - (830) 379-9900.

III. The Congregation Council needs to determine the congregation's financial commitment to the Interim Pastor.
   A. It is expected that expenses including mileage, telephone, and postage incurred by the Interim Pastor in ministering to the Parish shall be reimbursed each month. The Interim Pastor is responsible for remitting to the Council an itemized account of expenses.
   B. When a retired Pastor or a Pastor under special Call provides full or part time service to the Congregation, it is expected that the Pastor providing these services will receive adequate compensation as suggested in current Synodical guidelines.
Current Synodical Guidelines regarding services rendered to congregations

The following reflects the current suggested synodical guidelines regarding compensation for services rendered to congregations either during an interim pastor’s service or the service of another rostered leader. These figures are provided as a basis for conversation between these two parties.

**Mileage**
Mileage incurred performing congregational responsibilities will be reimbursed at current IRS rate for business travel. (.55 per mile in 2012)

**Preaching Services**
- Preaching on Sunday one service $150.00
- Preaching on Sunday two services $200.00
- Preaching at weekday services $150.00

**Meals and lodging**
Reimbursement at actual expense.

**Other services**
Visitation, teaching, meetings, counseling, correspondence, administration, and other similar duties must be part of the remuneration consideration. **Thirty dollars per hour** is suggested, however, since there are a variety of circumstances, it is difficult to arrive at a definite guideline for this area. Congregational Council and the interim pastor must be open in communicating their concerns for this part of the agreement.

When a final agreement covering the items listed above is reached it shall be put in writing and signed by the interim pastor and president or vice president of the Congregation Council and recorded in the Council's minutes. When an agreement of this type is established, no honorarium is necessary at the termination of an interim pastor's service, but one may be given, if the congregation desires.

Should you desire more information regarding the synodical guidelines for compensation, you may either call the Bishop's Office at (830) 379-9900, or write:

The Southwestern Texas Synod Office
1090 Oestreich Dr. Seguin, TX 78155
APPENDIX 12: Call Committee Report Form

Call Committee Report Form

*Please fill out this form and mail or fax to the address below:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congregation:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
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<tr>
<td>President/Vice-President:</td>
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<td>Address:</td>
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<td>Telephone Numbers: Home:</td>
<td>Office:</td>
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<td>Chair of the Call Committee:</td>
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<td>Address:</td>
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<td>Telephone Numbers: Home:</td>
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<td>Secretary of the Call Committee:</td>
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<td>Address:</td>
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<td>Telephone Numbers: Home:</td>
<td>Office:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Committee Persons (Names, Phone numbers, E-mail Addresses):</td>
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*Mail or fax to:*

The Southwestern Texas Synod Office, Attention: Bishop's Associate
1090 Oestreich Dr. Seguin, TX 78155
Fax: (830) 379-9990
APPENDIX 12: Call Committee Installation

THIS ORDER FOLLOWS THE CREED

Pastor:  
The following persons, having been chosen/elected to be the Call Committee, are asked to come forward as their names are read:

Pastor:  Saint Paul writes: There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them. There are different ways of serving, but the same Lord is served. There are different abilities to perform service, but the same God gives ability for some particular service to everyone. The Spirit's presence is shown in some way in each person for the good of all.

You have been appointed to a position of leadership and trust in this congregation. You are to seek the will of God and the mind and spirit of the congregation with regard to our pastoral needs.

You will examine the qualifications of prospective pastors, interview those who appear to be suitable candidates, and recommend only one person to the Congregation Council for its approval and recommendation regarding the issuance of a call by the congregation. In all your deliberations, you are to be examples of faith active in love, seeking to maintain the life, harmony and ministry of this congregation.

On behalf of your sisters and brothers in Christ, I now ask you: Will you accept and faithfully carry out the duties of the Call Committee?

All:  
We will

THE COMMITTEE FACES THE CONGREGATION, WHICH STANDS.

Pastor:  People of God, I ask you, will you support these, your brothers and sisters in Christ, in their task, and will you undergird their efforts with your prayers?

Cong.:  We will

Pastor:  I now declare you installed as the Call Committee of this congregation. God bless you and your work together in His name.

HERE FOLLOWS THE PRAYERS AND THE PEACE.
APPENDIX 13: Compensation Worksheet

DEFINITION OF COMPENSATION, BENEFITS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PASTOR

Prepared by ________________________________

for the Reverend ____________________________

for the period: _____________________________ to ____________________________

A. COMPENSATION

The congregation will provide the following annual compensation:

1. Base Cash Salary
2. Housing Allowance (if provided)
3. Self-employed Social Security payment allowance (if provided)
4. If a parsonage or other housing is provided:
   a. Utilities allowance
   b. Furnishings allowance
   c. Housing equity allowance

B. PENSION AND OTHER BENEFITS

The congregation will sponsor the pastor in the Pension and Other Benefits Program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which provides retirement, disability, survivor, and medical-dental coverage. (Sponsorship will include medical-dental coverage for the pastor’s spouse and children unless they have other employer-provided group medical insurance coverage and the pastor consents to waiving medical-dental coverage for them under the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.)

1. ELCA Pension at ________% of defined compensation
2. ELCA Medical-and-Dental Insurance (check one below):
   a. Member only
   b. Member and spouse
   c. Member and children
   d. Member, spouse, and children
   e. Coverage waived
3. Other insurance or benefits:

C. EXPENSES

The congregation will provide for the following expenses related to this pastor’s ministry.

1. Automobile and travel allowance
2. Other professional expenses
3. Expenses for official meetings of the synod, as reimbursed
4. Continuing education ($1,000 recommended; minimum $700 from calling source)
5. Other (____________________) $ __________________
6. Pay the moving expenses to this field of service as follows: ____________________________

D. AGREEMENT

1. Vacation time of ___________ days per year, including ___________ Sundays;
2. Continuing education time of ___________ weeks per year (recommended minimum of two weeks per year that may be accumulated up to three years, as reflected in a continuing-education agreement developed by the pastor and congregation council);
3. Participation in a First-Call Theological Education Program, where applicable;
4. Ongoing care through a Mutual Ministry Committee;
5. Up to two months of continued salary, housing, and contributions to the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program in a 12-month period in the event that the pastor is physically or mentally disabled; and
6. Where applicable, parental leave up to six weeks with full salary, housing, and benefits.

Provision may be made for further unpaid time for disability recovery as agreed by the congregation, but with the stipulation that unused accumulated sick leave will not be compensated at the end of this call.
E. OTHER PROVISIONS

Special emphases of the pastor and special encouragement by the congregation:

1. During this time period, the pastor will give special attention in ministry to the following:

   (a) 
   (b) 
   (c) 
   (d) 
   (e) 

2. The congregation will encourage this pastor's ministry in the following ways:

   (a) 
   (b) 
   (c) 
   (d) 
   (e) 

F. OTHER MATTERS

(Such as accountabilities, service on synodical or churchwide boards and committees, work in church-camp programs, or other such details)

We, the undersigned, certify that the necessary approvals of the congregation and congregational council have been granted for the provisions set forth above.

__________________________________________
Congregation President

__________________________________________
Council Secretary

Date: ________________________

I certify that I accept the above statement:

The Reverend ___________________________ Date of signature: ___________________________
APPENDIX 14: Letter of Call (sample)

LETTER OF CALL

TO AN ORDAINED MINISTER OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

In the Name of the Father,  

With prayers for the guidance of the Holy Spirit to do God’s will,

a congregation of the  
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
meeting on

extends to you this call to serve as  

We call you to exercise among us the ministry of Word and Sacrament which God has established and which the Holy Spirit empowers: To preach and teach the Word of God in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions; to administer Holy Baptism and Holy Communion; to lead us in worship to proclaim the forgiveness of sins; to provide pastoral care; to speak for justice in behalf of the poor and oppressed; to encourage persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel; to impart knowledge of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its wider ministry; to endeavor to increase support given by our congregation to the work of our whole church; to equip us for witness and service; and guide us in proclaiming God’s love through word and deed.

In accepting this call, you will adhere to the standards and policies for the study of Holy Scriptures, and be diligent in the holy living.

With this call, we pledge our prayers, love, cheer, and personal support for the sake of the ministry entrusted to you by God and for our ministry together in Christ’s name. Specific responsibilities, compensation, benefits, and conditions of this call are contained in a document related to this call.

In testimony of this call, we have subscribed our names on behalf of the congregation on this  
day of , A.D.

President

Secretary

Attested by

Bishop of the

Date of synodical bishop’s signing
Other Workshops Available:
- Relationships In A Healthy Congregation
- Healthy Congregations Develop Generous People
- The Spiritual Care of Healthy Congregations

What is the cost?
Your cost for each workshop is only $20 per person for the hosting congregation to cover the cost of their study guide, food and to offset facilitator travel costs. Cost for those not members of the hosting congregation is $25. This may be covered by the congregation or by the individual participants. Payments will be received with registration.

Trained Facilitators
Pastor Sue Briner and Pastor Bill Swantner are both trained as Healthy Congregations Facilitators and have taught and used the workshops extensively in their ministry contexts.

For more information, or to schedule a workshop for your congregation, contact:
Pastor Sue Briner
(843) 810-9449
sbriner@swtsynod.org

Healthy Congregations
A series of workshops designed to give leaders the tools they need for mission-focused leadership

Southwestern Texas Synod
1090 Oestreich Dr.
Segun, TX 78155

Phone: 830-379-9900
Fax: 830-379-9990
E-mail: sbriner@swtsynod.org

http://www.healthycongregations.com/
HEALTHY CONGREGATIONS

Where is your congregation headed?

Workshops

With breaks, meals and conversation, each workshop lasts about six hours.

Three workshops build on one another; they should be taken 4-6 months apart.

Pastors, Councils, call committees, church staff and other church leaders should attend.

Congregations can combine resources by hosting workshops together.

Workshops are interactive, and learner centered. Creative teaching techniques include videos, group projects, case study, practice, large and small group discussion.

Basics of the Workshops

Workshop #1
Creating Healthy Congregations

- Introduction to Systems Thinking as a way to see the congregation
- Equipping leaders to value differences, focus on strengths and mission.
- Leaders will begin to develop/refine their mission and vision for the future

Workshop #2
Healthy Congregations Respond to Anxiety and Change

- Equipping leaders to respond to anxiety and change (rather than react to it)
- Equipping leaders to effectively manage conflict (rather than avoiding it)
- Equipping leaders to act flexibly and creatively

Workshop #3
Leadership in Healthy Congregations

- Equipping leaders to promote health through their presence and functioning
- Equipping leaders to challenge people
- Equipping leaders to provide immune capacities

These workshops enable leaders to:

- Gain a renewed sense of purpose and mission
- Cultivate strong leadership capacities to challenge the congregation
- Learn how to develop healthy patterns of living together in community
- Learn to focus on strengths, resources and options for the future
- Boost confidence in responding to challenges and opportunities
- Learn how to lead with calm and thoughtfulness
- Reflect theologically about relationships
- Move the congregation toward healthier functioning