



**Upper Susquehanna Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

# **Mutual Ministry Handbook**

**Bishop Robert Driesen**

**Guidance for Healthy  
Congregations**



# Upper Susquehanna Synod

## Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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### Mutual Ministry

#### A Theological Understanding of Ministry

For the sake of the world that God loves, God has entrusted the Gospel to his Church and given the Church the task of proclaiming the Gospel to all. This "ministry" (*diakonia*) is, in itself, an act of God's ongoing activity to reconcile the world to himself through the saving work of his Son.

All the baptized have been entrusted with the Church's ministry—to proclaim the Gospel through word and deed—and are rightly called "ministers of the Gospel." Hence, the Church's ministry has a universal character. The Church's priesthood is of all believers.

Nonetheless, God calls some among the baptized to particular ministry within the Church, including the divinely instituted Office of Word and Sacrament, also for the sake of the Gospel. Those called to the Office of Word and Sacrament have the threefold task of proclaiming the Gospel to the world--evangelizing, witnessing, serving--and of building up in Christ those who already believe--teaching, exhorting, reproving, and sanctifying, by Word and Sacrament. While it can be said that all the baptized have been called to a ministry *of* the Gospel; the ordained also have been called to a ministry *to* the Gospel. *Pure* preaching and the *right* administration of the sacraments are examples of this third task of the ordained.

It is the whole people of God, however, who have been called to ministry, and, therefore, it is the whole people of God who are accountable for this ministry. At no time is it possible for Lutherans to suggest that it is the pastor or other rostered leaders of this church who are solely accountable for the ministry that occurs in a congregation or other setting.

#### What is Mutual Ministry?

The term "mutual ministry" recognizes that the Church's ministry is the mutual concern of both the laity and the pastor. It encourages us to move away from a primary focus on the ministry of ordained clergy alone and includes all the people of God in the mutual work of ministry. There is one ministry in Christ and all baptized people participate in it according to the gifts given to them and the specific ministries entrusted to them.

In embracing mutual ministry, we understand that we are all God's beloved. Just as Jesus emerged from the waters of baptism to the announcement that "this is my son, my beloved; in him I am well pleased..." we too emerge from the waters of our baptisms as God's beloved, empowered to share in Christ's ministry, empowered to bring God's love and God's truth to a broken world.

We understand we are given to each other to look for and draw the Christ from each other. Together we help one another recognize that we are, indeed, God's beloved and that we are to respond to the One who loved us first by recognizing the God-given gifts each person has for ministry. As a community we affirm those gifts God calls us to offer within the community and in our daily lives, and we work together to match our gifts to the needs of the Church and the wider community.

Mutual ministry, therefore, on the one hand, is a commitment to recognize that we all share in Christ's ministry. It, on the other hand, is a process as we listen prayerfully together, as we discern various gifts, and as we become more and more in touch with ministry as a way of life, living out our ministries in the church and daily life.

### **A Congregational Mutual Ministry Committee**

The model constitution for congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America urges the establishment of a Mutual Ministry Committee (Model Constitution, Chapter 13) that is appointed jointly by the pastor and congregational lay president. No specific definition of mutual ministry is given, however, nor is a job description provided for those who might serve on such a committee. This handbook provides suggestions about how a mutual ministry committee might function in a congregation. It is offered as a model that may be adjusted to meet the specific needs of particular congregations. In no way is it intended to be proscriptive. Assistance and/or training for mutual ministry committees is available through the synod office.

### **Pit-falls to Avoid**

Many congregations have thought of mutual ministry committees as personnel committees. Such committees define the job descriptions of the congregation's staff, evaluate staff performance, make recommendations to finance committees and/or the congregation council about staff salaries, and serve as the place where complaints from the congregation are discussed. Such a model reinforces the notion that ministry is about the pastor and other paid leaders in the church. This is not "mutual" ministry.

While all of the above tasks must be performed by someone (e.g. a personnel committee, the congregation council), experience suggests that these tasks should not be the responsibility of the mutual ministry committee.

## What a Mutual Ministry Committee Could Do:

1. Evaluate how effectively the goals of the congregation are being met for both ministry within the congregation and to the world (including its immediate community.)

The assumption is that the goals have been set by others, perhaps by the pastor(s) and congregation council or by means of a congregational meeting or informal gathering. These goals, of course, always should be a reflection of the Christ and his mission in and to the world through the Church.

An evaluation of these goals considers not only the role of professional leaders in meeting these goals, but also the council, other lay leaders, and the congregation as a whole.

2. Make recommendations to the council, other committees, and/or the congregation regarding how congregational goals may be more effectively met and by whom.

The assumption is that the mutual ministry committee is not directly responsible for the fulfillment of the congregation's goals, but rather routinely monitors the effectiveness of the congregation's ministry.

3. Dialogue about perceptions and concerns within the congregation.

Not every perception or concern is a legitimate one. The mutual ministry committee is not a complaint committee, but it seeks to find ways for pastor(s), other leaders, and congregation to work together for the sake of the Gospel. When a perception or concern is considered illegitimate, the mutual ministry committee seeks ways to be thoughtfully corrective. While complaints and concerns must be addressed, the mutual ministry committee is not the congregation's advocate for or against the pastor (or *vice versa*). The mutual ministry committee's focus is always on the congregation's ministry, and how it may be carried out effectively *for the sake of the Gospel* and *not* for the sake of any individual, pastor or lay person.

4. Address conflicts among members that may affect the congregation's ministry, as well as between members of the congregation and the pastor or other rostered leaders.

Conflicts should be addressed, not from the assumption that one party is right and the other wrong, but from the perspective that conflicts, regardless of who is right or wrong, may interfere with the congregation's true purpose—the mission of our Lord Jesus. Viewed from such a perspective, conflicts can become useful in that they drive the congregation to reconsider what it means for everyone in the

congregation—including the pastor and other rostered leaders—to be the servants of the Gospel.

The advice of our Lord to the Church in St. Matthew's Gospel may be a helpful starting point in addressing conflicts that require an intervention. Clearly, parking lot meetings, gossip, complaining to other members, personal attacks, and quiet withdrawal are *ineffective and inappropriate* methods for dealing with grievances. Instead, all Christians should prayerfully consider this reconciliation procedure:

**Matthew 18:15-20**

"If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one.<sup>16</sup> But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses.<sup>17</sup> If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.<sup>18</sup> Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.<sup>19</sup> Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.<sup>20</sup> For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." *New Revised Standard Version*

Following our Lord's counsel, persons with disagreements first take them directly to the person with whom they are having a difficulty. They complain not to others but rather go directly to the other congregation member, the pastor, or the member of the congregation's staff with whom they are having a difficulty. Their goal is reconciliation, the restoration of the relationship between two or more parties. If reconciliation cannot be achieved, the person takes one or two other persons with them—e.g., a wise, dispassionate, unbiased person—again for the sake of reconciliation. If this, too, fails, then the aggrieved person follows the procedures established by the congregation to resolve conflicts.

All of us fail, at times, to seek reconciliation. We build walls to protect ourselves from the other, assign blame, and seek to demonize. A mutual ministry committee can become a dispassionate, unbiased body that empowers others to seek a resolution to the conflict—even if that resolution should be "to agree to disagree." It is never helpful to suggest that since a particular person(s) did not follow St. Mathew's counsel, their issue will not be heard. Unresolved conflicts rarely go away and often intensify when avoided or suppressed. The mutual ministry committee can assist these persons to find better ways to deal with disagreements. In effect, it can become a "congregational coach" for the sake of the Gospel.

When members of a mutual ministry committee find themselves as active participants in a disagreement, or find it impossible to be “dispassionate and unbiased,” they should recuse themselves. If the entire committee is involved in the disagreement, others should be asked to assume the leadership. The absence of “dispassionate and unbiased” persons will exacerbate the disagreement rather than result in reconciliation.

Resources regarding conflict resolution are available on the synod’s website ([http://www.uss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/03/the\\_reconciliation\\_of\\_conflicts\\_within\\_a\\_congregation.pdf](http://www.uss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/03/the_reconciliation_of_conflicts_within_a_congregation.pdf).) The Synod’s Reconciliation Team can also be a useful resource in dealing with a disagreement that cannot be resolved locally or when a “third party” is needed to serve as the dispassionate, unbiased listener.

Because disagreements almost always elicit deeply-felt emotions that can easily “infect” those who are not directly involved, thus making it a challenge to remain “dispassionate and unbiased,” it is advisable for a mutual ministry committee to regularly review what its role is in dealing with disagreements whenever they arise.

The complaints of others never are transferred to the mutual ministry committee so that it becomes the advocate for one party or another. The committee always functions for the sake of the congregation’s mutual ministry.

5. Serve as a source of support for the pastor and other leaders in times of personal or professional stress.

The mutual ministry committee cares for all the baptized, including those called to other rostered leadership within this church, as they seek to serve our Lord and his mission. Ministry can be lonely, and leaders easily become the targets of the frustrations of others. The mutual ministry committee can be the source of support and care.

6. Serve as a “focus group,” representative of the congregation, as leaders share ideas for ministry and seek to assess how best to accomplish what is being proposed.

The mutual ministry committee can help leaders avoid unhealthy conflict by assessing proposals and helping to seek the appropriate ways of introducing change or new ministries. This does not mean that the mutual ministry committee becomes the “gate keeper” regarding change or the congregation’s ministry. Instead, the committee serves as a “sounding board” and offers suggestions.

7. Support the pastor’s and other rostered leaders’ need for spiritual self-care, compensation, maternity-paternity leave, sabbaticals, and continuing education.

The mutual ministry committee seeks ways to further the congregation's mission. Therefore, it seeks to be supportive of those who have been entrusted with leadership. While others have different responsibilities, including the finance committee and the council, the mutual ministry committee, when it deems that it is appropriate, serves as an advocate for the legitimate needs of those within the congregation who minister.

8. Is alert to the early warning signs within a congregation of misunderstanding that may eventually lead to difficulty.
9. Serve as the exit interviewer when a pastor or other rostered leader announces his/or her departure from the congregation. Suggestions for exit interviews of both the departing leader and a focus group of congregational members can be found in the Call Manual for Congregational Councils (<http://www.uss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/03/call-manual-for-councils.pdf>)

### **When should a Mutual Ministry Committee be formed?**

Since the mutual ministry committee is jointly appointed by the pastor and lay council president, it may be advisable to utilize a call committee as a transitional mutual ministry committee for the first six to twelve months of a newly called pastor's ministry. In the initial stage of a pastor's new call, he/she will not yet know the people he/she believes has the necessary gifts to be appointed to the mutual ministry committee. A mutual ministry committee should be appointed, at the latest, by the first anniversary of a pastor's call to the congregation.

It is unwise to appoint a mutual ministry committee in the midst of an ongoing conflict or upheaval within the congregation. Such timing would lead to a misunderstanding about the mutual ministry committee's primary responsibilities.

### **A New Committee or the Old Committee?**

If your congregation already has a mutual ministry committee that has been functioning with very different assumptions about its role, it may be best to create a new committee and either disband the old committee or redefine what it truly is (e.g. a personnel committee).

### **When is a Mutual Ministry Committee Disbanded?**

Since a mutual ministry committee is appointed jointly by both the pastor and council president, a mutual ministry committee should be disbanded whenever a pastor leaves a congregation. If multiple staff are being served by the mutual ministry committee, the

committee could continue to meet with remaining staff members until a new committee is formed.

### **What about Multiple Church Parishes or Partners?**

Depending upon the closeness of the relationship among partners, a single mutual ministry committee may be able to serve all the partners. Each partner, however, should have an equitable representation on the committee. A major responsibility of a single mutual ministry committee among multiple partners would be to focus upon the ways the separate partners share in the joint ministry of the parish or partnership. While joint councils focus upon financial, property and other matters, the mutual ministry committee focuses upon the partners' *mutual ministry*.

### **What about Congregations with Multiple Staff Members?**

A mutual ministry committee in a multiple staff congregation also considers the responsibilities and relationships among the various staff members for the sake of the congregation's ministry. When disagreements arise among staff members, the mutual ministry committee is not an advocate for one staff member over against another, but rather is an advocate for the congregation's mutual ministry and how it can be best served. The suggestions above regarding the resolution of conflicts within a congregation would be applicable also in a conflict among the congregation's staff. A personnel committee and/or congregation council—not the mutual ministry committee—has the responsibility for administering personnel policies, and the hiring or firing of non-rostered staff members.

### **To whom is the Mutual Ministry Committee Accountable?**

The mutual ministry committee is defined in the model constitution for congregations as a congregational committee rather than a congregation council committee, primarily because this committee is appointed jointly by the pastor and lay council president and because the members of the committee may or may not be members of the council. Indeed, there is no constitutional requirement that any of the members of the committee be members of the council. This committee, like all committees, reports to the council and makes its recommendations to the council.

Committee members also are accountable to each other for maintaining strict confidentiality of all personal information shared during their work together. Failure to maintain confidentiality will undermine the committee's responsibility. Provisions should be made for the removal of committee members who breach trust. One suggestion is that since the committee is appointed jointly by the pastor and council president, a member may be similarly discharged if they do not choose to remove themselves from the committee.

## How Can We Get Started?

Check the provisions in your congregation's constitution related to a mutual ministry committee, the number of members to be appointed, and how they are selected.

[Model constitution: **C13.04.** "A *Mutual Ministry Committee*" (in the absence of a mutual ministry committee, the duties shall be fulfilled by the executive committee) shall be appointed jointly by the president [vice president] and the pastor. Term of office shall be two years, with three members to be appointed each successive year."]

In the absence of constitutional provisions or for further reflection regarding current provisions, the following considerations may be helpful:

1. Because of the relational nature of this committee's work, continuity on this committee is helpful, with some changeover each year.
2. Establishing "term limits" in advance might help with recruiting membership (especially with those who don't want to commit indefinitely), and avoids having to retain someone who proves to be unhelpful to the committee's work.
3. How many members? As few as three members, but probably not more than six, is suggested.
4. A cross-section of congregation is helpful in terms of gender, age, length of membership, marital status, retired/working/students
5. Desired skills/traits of members : open-minded, willing to listen, able to keep confidentiality, willing to engage in group dynamics, capable of vision, sensitivity to group dynamics, actively engaged in congregation (but not necessary leader), well-differentiated, healthy, knowledge of and appreciation for larger church
6. Beware of the person who is TOO eager to serve on this committee. They may have a hidden agenda that will become all too clear with time. Opening membership to volunteers does not necessarily lead to the formation of a good team.
8. Neither the pastor nor council president should be chair, rather the chair, ideally, should be selected among members of committee.
9. The pastor and council president should approach appointments to this committee in the context of prayer, asking God's Holy Spirit to lift up those needed for this ministry.

## Possible Agenda Items for the Mutual Ministry Committee

1. Spend some time getting to know each other. Listen to one another's life/faith stories, including the history of each person's involvement in the Church and this congregation. Build a relationship of trust over a period of time before tackling more sensitive issues.
2. Review the congregational meeting and its goals, emphases and priorities for the coming year.
3. Review the pastor's or other rostered leader's job description (and/or their use of time) for the past year, and together decide what programs, tasks, etc. need to be added or dropped according to the congregation's priorities.
4. Encourage the pastor or other rostered leader to engage in continuing education and help in its planning.
5. Encourage adequate time off and vacation and make the plans to obtain necessary coverage on behalf of the congregation council.
6. Discuss how well the congregation is sharing leadership and tasks by using appropriate resources.
7. Discuss joys, issues, and stresses of the pastor or other rostered leader and the congregation.
8. Review parsonage/housing arrangements, office space, and attendance at committees and organizations, both inside and outside the congregation. (e.g. Is attendance expected at the meetings of all parish committees and/or auxiliaries?)
9. Discuss and encourage the pastor's or other rostered leader's participation in community organizations and the work of both the synod and churchwide in light of schedule demands and the pastor's or other rostered leader's need for self-care.
10. Review the congregation's goals, the pastor/professional leader's goals, and the work of the committee during the past year.
11. Prepare a report for the annual congregational meeting.
12. Consider appropriate recognition for the past year's work of the congregation's staff, including the pastor and other rostered leaders.
13. Focus attention upon the pastor's or other rostered leader's spouse and children. Have they adjusted to the congregation and community? How are they coping

with the unique stresses of being a member of the pastor's or other rostered leader's family? Does the committee need to provide them with support, encouragement or assistance? Should they be *invited* to a particular meeting of the mutual ministry committee? (Be prepared to gracefully accept a rejection of the invitation). Invite the pastor or other rostered leader to respond to statements such as: "I believe my spouse's life/ my children's lives in this congregation would be greatly enhanced if...."

14. Discuss the pastor's or other rostered leader's frustrations in serving the congregation. Case studies might be useful in order to provide concrete examples. Prepare the case studies in advance and distribute them to the committee. Consider the possibility of avoiding the use of names, although in small congregations it may be impossible to mask identities. Do not stop with the negative. Discuss how the situation(s) can be handled. Remember the committee's need to maintain confidentiality.
15. Invite the pastor's or other rostered leader's assessment of the ministry of the congregation, Make positive suggestions for improvement, including recommendations to the council and/or its committees.
16. Listen for the human tendencies to exaggerate faults and to minimize strengths. Be an advocate for all those engaged in the congregation's ministry, and assist in turning negatives into positives.
17. Review with the pastor his or her official Letter of Call, which describes the broad duties of pastoral ministry, as well as specific items that may have been added during the call process. Have conversation about how these ministries are happening, and how they might be made more effective.

## EVALUATING OUR MUTUAL MINISTRY: AN OVERVIEW

Mutual ministry necessitates evaluation. The focus of the committee's evaluation is always of the whole Church's ministry (not merely the congregation's ministry) and the mutual involvement of the congregation and its lay leaders. A review of expectations is always helpful, since some may have unspoken expectations by which the other(s) is being evaluated that are not shared by all.

### INTRODUCTION

The evaluation of ministry is a sensitive subject. It can only be well-received when all parties trust one another. It is important to realize, however, that the issue is never evaluation versus no evaluation. Evaluation of ministry always occurs in one form or another. The congregation is always evaluating the pastor and other rostered leaders and vice versa, even if it is just at an informal gathering of persons over a cup of coffee. The setting for evaluating ministry, however, can be more orderly and guided. The important issue is: should evaluation be regularized and given some structure? If yes, then the next question that must be addressed is the extent to which evaluation can be creatively channeled and utilized. Answers to this question concern why and what we are evaluating.

First, *why* we evaluate. The purpose of evaluating ministry is to strengthen the Church. While evaluation always occurs, some evaluation is constructive and some not. Some aid in "building up the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12), and some serve only to diminish it. Lutheran theology affirms that ministry belongs to the whole people of God. All baptized people have gifts that can be used in service to both the Church and the world. St. Paul makes this challenge regarding gifts: "Having gifts that differ . . . let us use them . . ." (Romans 12:6). Carefully designed processes of the mutual evaluation of ministry are vital in order to identify these gifts constructively, and then use them creatively.

Second, *what* do we evaluate. Businesses and industries tend to evaluate performance. Unfortunately, many within the church also think of evaluation in terms of leader performance. Materials frequently imply this in titles such as "Pastor Rating Chart," "Performance Evaluation System," or "Peer Leadership Evaluation." "Clergy evaluation" is sometimes a broad term that really stands for performance appraisal. This is the wrong "*what*."

Some problems regarding evaluation are the result of the Church simply borrowing instruments and procedures from business and industry. These problems arise because the theological "*why*" is missing, as is an understanding of the nature of ministry, both ordained and lay. In addition, borrowed instruments are frequently too mechanical, and do not lend themselves well to the new situation.

The “*what*” in our Lutheran tradition is the evaluation of *mutual* ministry, the ministries shared among the pastor, other rostered leaders and the entire congregation, including its lay leadership. Furthermore, such ministries are not limited to those carried out in the institutional settings of the church, but are inclusive of ministry in all aspects of daily life and work. Therefore, **the purpose of evaluation is to improve our mutual understanding of God’s mission, and to strengthen our ministries together and individually.** The key ingredient in this approach to evaluation is people engaged in ongoing dialogue. Questionnaires and forms are secondary.

### **SOME CLARIFICATIONS BEFORE A MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE BEGINS AN EVALUATION**

The following six points need to be clarified before looking at the benefits and models involved in evaluating ministry:

1. Evaluation is not a pass/fail test which focuses only on the ministry of the pastor or other rostered leaders. The purpose of evaluation is to strengthen the ministry of the pastor, other rostered leaders, and the congregation.
2. Evaluation usually cannot take place when there is widespread discontent with the pastor or other rostered leaders. Discontent should be dealt with directly and openly, not as part of evaluating ministry. While ongoing evaluation can prevent such crises from occurring, evaluation should never be used as a punitive measure or as a veiled threat in the presence of conflict.
3. Evaluation is not a thirty minute item on a committee’s agenda, nor is it simply passing out a questionnaire to the congregation. Honest evaluation takes time. It involves people. It is a conversation among pastor, other rostered leaders, the mutual ministry committee, and perhaps others who are engaged in particular congregational ministries.
4. Evaluation must have a baseline from which to measure. Articulated and mutually agreed upon criteria are needed in light of which the course of ministry can be evaluated. Evaluating ministry is not a matter of subjective likes and dislikes. The underlying question always is: what is Christ—not specific persons, or families--calling us to be and do in this place?
5. Evaluation of mutual ministry takes into consideration a broad range of concerns including the work of the whole Church and the service of God’s people in the world. It is not limited simply to the immediate and local goals of the congregation alone.
6. Evaluation is not directly linked to the compensation of pastors or other rostered leaders. It is important that compensation be the responsibility of others and not the mutual ministry committee. Clearly, others may consider the mutual ministry

committee's evaluation, but remember that this evaluation is not about the performance of leaders but rather the effectiveness of the congregation's ministry—its *mutual* ministry.

### **BENEFITS OF EVALUATING MUTUAL MINISTRY**

A variety of benefits emerge when a specific group carries out an ongoing plan for evaluating the mutual ministry of the congregation and its leaders.

1. Evaluation can assist the congregation in identifying and affirming the special gifts, talents, and skills of a pastor, other rostered leader, and of lay members.
1. It provides a forum for reviewing the changing needs of the congregation and updating its mission goals.
2. The results of evaluation can be used as an informal basis for planning.
3. Evaluating encourages those involved to deal with realities and set priorities. Time, finances and people resources are limited.
4. The procedure encourages a shared approach to ministry. No one pastor, lay leader, or other rostered leader can or should be expected to do everything that needs to be done in a congregation.
1. If evaluation is an ongoing process shared by an ongoing committee, it eliminates the pass/fail attitude and the fear that so often is associated with evaluation.
2. It encourages those who share ministry to be excited and forward-looking.
3. Finally, evaluating mutual ministry makes ministry together more satisfying and effective.

### **MODELS FOR EVALUATING MINISTRY**

The following models are offered as possibilities. Not all models are appropriate in every situation. Mutual ministry committees need to be selective in choosing models, adapt them, or use them as spring boards to create other models.

### **RESOURCES**

The Episcopal Church USA provides a wonderful resource for mutual ministry. It can be obtained online at:

[http://images.acswebnetworks.com/1/62/Living\\_into\\_our\\_Ministries.pdf](http://images.acswebnetworks.com/1/62/Living_into_our_Ministries.pdf)

## **MODEL A**

### **EVALUATING MINISTRY UTILIZING AN ANNIVERSARY**

An anniversary can be a time for celebration and reflection, whether that anniversary be of the founding of the congregation or the call of the pastor or other rostered leader to the congregation, both of which occur annually. It is an appropriate time for the pastor, other staff members, and the congregation to review together the past, acknowledge good and bad times together, and make fresh commitments. Therefore, an anniversary is an appropriate time to consider an evaluation of the congregation's mutual ministry.

#### **Participants**

Those who will participate in this evaluation process are pastor, other rostered leaders, staff members, the mutual ministry committee, and perhaps others directly responsible for specific aspects of the congregation's ministry.

#### **Materials**

Every participant involved in this evaluating process should have a copy of this guide re: evaluating mutual ministry. Also copies of the official call of a pastor or other rostered leader, the contract for non-rostered staff members, and other appropriate background materials listed in Step 1 below should be available to participants.

You will also need sheets of newsprint and felt-tip markers, a chalkboard and chalk, or an electronic means for projecting responses.

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

#### **Overview**

##### **Step 1.**

Review background materials relating to the call of the pastor or the materials relating to the contract of the other rostered leader, such as the congregation's "Ministry Site Profile," its mission statement, and any other statements of formalized goals.

##### **Step 2.**

Answer the question, "Where is the congregation/ its leaders now - 12 months, 24 months, 36 months after calling our pastor or other rostered leader, or hiring non-rostered staff? Where is it 20 years/ 100 years after the congregation's founding?"

##### **Step 3.**

Identify ways to strengthen your ministry together.

##### **Step 4.**

Develop three specific strategies which will strengthen your ministry.

## **Leadership**

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

## **Time and Timing**

This evaluating process will take three to five hours. Depending on the amount of background material you will review and the amount of preparation time participants are given, you may need only one hour to accomplish Step 1, or you may need several hours. Allow one to two hours, for Step 2. Steps 3 and 4 can be accomplished in one to two hours.

## **Detailed Procedure**

### **Step 1 Review Appropriate Background Materials**

A baseline is necessary for effective evaluation. Begin by looking at whatever background materials you deem appropriate. You can establish your baseline by doing the following:

Prepare copies of all appropriate background materials such as:

- a. Material used in the vacancy study (Ministry Site Profile),
- b. Official call of a pastor or other rostered leader, or a contract for non-rostered staff,
- c. Job description and any written expectations,
- d. Congregation's constitution,
- e. Mission statement or long-range goals for the congregation,
- f. Annual congregational reports,
- g. Material from any previous evaluation.

Prior to any discussion, provide all participants with copies of the appropriate background materials so they can review all materials thoroughly. Set aside adequate time for dialogue, clarification, and identification of common themes. Remember, this was what was said then. Perceptions may have been incorrect. Expectations may have been unclear. The situation may have changed. Nevertheless, review the materials and identify what were the stated expectations at that time. This review may take a brief time or it may take several hours.

Avoid discussion of what is the present situation. That will come in Step 2.

Once your group has a common understanding of what was said in the past (you may not have a common agreement on what was said), then you are ready to analyze "where we are now."

## **Step 2 Where Are We Now?**

Write your responses to the following six items:

- a. List the three most exciting or significant things that occurred in your congregation during the past 12 months (or 24 months or 36 months).
- b. List the three most disappointing or frustrating things that occurred in your congregation during the past 12 months (or 24 months or 36 months).
- c. What are the three most productive, meaningful, or appreciated aspects of your pastor's or your other rostered leader's ministry?
- d. What are the three most misunderstood, least appreciated, or least helpful aspects of your pastor's or your lay staff's ministry?
- e. What are the three most productive examples of the congregation's and its council's role in its ministry?
- f. What are three frustrating examples of the congregation's and its council's role (or lack thereof) in its ministry?

After everyone has finished writing, share your responses with other members of your group. Choose a recorder to list everyone's responses on newsprint, on a chalkboard, or by means of an electronic projector. Share and record all responses to item (a) before proceeding to item (b) and so forth through item (f).

After all comments have been shared and recorded, begin general discussion. Ask for clarification; look for common themes; analyze your current situation. Summarize by answering the question, "Where are we now as pastor, other leaders, and congregation?"

## **Step 3 and Step 4 fit together. (1 to 2 hours each)**

You can work on both at the same meeting; however, keep the steps separated. In Step 3 you identify all the possible options and opportunities. In Step 4 you develop specific strategies for the three most likely ways in which you will renew your ministry together.

## **Step 3 Ways to Renew Our Ministry Together**

1. Write down three different endings to the following sentence:  
In light of our review of the background materials and our analysis of where we are now, I think that we could renew our ministry together by:

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

2. On newsprint, chalkboard, or by electronic means, list everyone's suggestions.
3. After all suggestions have been shared and recorded, identify the suggestions which are similar or closely related.
4. On newsprint or chalkboard write five or six suggestions which summarize the thinking of your group.
5. From this list of five or six suggestions, identify the three suggestions that will most likely renew your ministry together. At this point in evaluating, both understanding and consensus would be helpful.

You can't do everything at once. Therefore, start by identifying those three items which are most needed and most likely to bring renewed effectiveness and commitment to the congregation's mutual ministry. God provides many opportunities for ministry. You have selected three areas with which to begin. Others may be developed later.

#### **Step 4 Specific Strategies for Renewing Our Ministry**

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

1. Complete the worksheet that accompanies this model (See appendix 1). It is important to be specific about the what, why, who, and when of your strategies.
2. Working with other participants, develop three specific strategies that will renew your ministry together.
3. Make sure every member of the mutual ministry committee has a copy of the final strategies.
4. Share your strategies with your Congregation Council.
5. Implement the strategies that you have outlined.

Anniversaries can be celebration times. Hopefully, you have used this "anniversary review" to celebrate the gifts that God has given your pastor or other rostered leader and the gifts God has given you and other members of your congregation.

## **MODEL B: REFLECTIONS ON THE EXPECTATIONS FOR A PASTOR AND CONGREGATION COUNCIL**

This model for evaluating mutual ministry will help you reflect upon the expectations of this church for its leaders. It will help you take time to affirm and acknowledge where there is agreement on common expectations. Where there are differences in interpretation and expectations seek to identify what might be done by the pastor and by the congregation to reach a more common basis of understanding.

### **Background**

Ordained ministry is set within the context of the ministry of the whole people of God. This worksheet, therefore, can be extremely helpful when used and discussed by the pastor and mutual ministry committee. It may also be used for individual reflection.

### **Instructions**

Each person needs a copy of this model, the congregation's constitution, the "Model Constitution for ELCA Congregations regarding Ordained Ministers and Congregation Councils" (See Appendix 2), the official letter of call to the pastor, "Vision and Expectations: Ordained Ministers" (See Appendix 3), and any pertinent local documents or statements (e.g. job descriptions for the pastor, council members, committee chair persons and committee members).

Not every leader has the same God-given talents and skills. Congregational priorities are different and always should be adjusting to the local needs. The purpose of this model, therefore, is not to "grade the leader(s)" or to find criticism. The purpose is to clarify expectations, to promote dialogue, and to take steps to strengthen the ministry of both pastor and people.

The following four steps are suggested to facilitate reflections on the Constitution for Congregations, the ELCA's statement, "*Visions and Expectations: Ordained Ministers*," and any local documents related to the congregation's expectations of its pastor (e.g., the official call of the pastor, a job description.)

**Step I:** Read and study the statements regarding pastors and congregation councils in the ELCA (See Appendices 2 and 3) and any local documents or statements. When a congregation's constitution differs from the model constitution, discuss the reasons why. [Note: If the model constitution's provisions are prefaced by an asterisk (\*), it is a required provision for all ELCA congregations. Variations related to asterisked items should result in a revision of the local congregation's constitution following the constitutionally mandated process. Refer this task to the appropriate leaders.]

**Step II:** Each individual completes a reflection worksheet (see Appendix 4).

**Step III:** Discuss the reflections in this order:

- (a) Where are there common expectations regarding important categories?
- (b) Where are there common expectations regarding effective categories?
- (c) Where are there major differences in expectations?

**Step IV:** Decide what can be done to strengthen our ministry together. Some examples are:

- (a) Develop or revise position descriptions for the pastor, council and committees,
- (b) Create new congregational programs/activities,
- (c) Make recommendations for Congregation Council and/or specific committees' consideration,
- (d) Identify areas or topics for continuing education for the pastor,
- (e) Identify educational needs of the congregation, the council, and/or committees.

## **MODEL C: REFLECTIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION OF PASTORS AND OTHER ROSTERED LEADERS WITHIN THE ELCA**

### **OVERVIEW**

#### **Participants**

Those who will participate in this evaluation process are pastor or other rostered leader and the mutual ministry committee. Other congregation members may be invited to participate in Step 1.

#### **Materials**

Every participant involved in this evaluation process should have a copy of this guide and a pencil.

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

Step 1. Reflect upon the responsibilities of ordained ministry

Step 2. Identify the strengths of the pastor or other rostered leader.

Step 3. Identify the goals of the congregation.

Step 4. Identify specific areas in which continuing education by the pastor or other rostered leader might strengthen mutual ministry.

#### **Leadership**

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

#### **Time**

This evaluation process will take approximately two hours. The group can do Step 1 at one meeting and complete Steps 2 through 4 at the following meeting. Another option is to complete all four steps in one meeting.

#### **Step 1**

##### **Reflect on the Ministry of Pastor or Other Rostered Leader**

Just as our ministry is shared, plans for continuing education for church leaders can be shared. Each year we can reflect on what we have been doing and give direction to what we want to do in the future.

1. Give copies of this model to the pastor or other rostered leader and the members of the mutual ministry committee. You might also invite other members of your congregation to complete the “Reflections and Directions Worksheet (See appendix 5).

2. Ask each person to complete the “Reflections and Directions Worksheet” (Appendix 5) by reflecting on each of the responsibilities of ministry in which your pastor or other rostered leader may be involved. Rate his/her strength and competency.
3. A designated member of the mutual ministry committee or your group’s facilitator should receive a completed worksheet from everyone who was asked to complete one.

## **Step 2**

### **Identify the Pastor’s or Other Rostered Leader’s Strengths**

1. One or two members of the mutual ministry committee and the pastor or other rostered leader should review the ratings of all “Reflections and Directions Worksheets” and identify areas of greatest strength.
2. Return the worksheets to the persons who completed them.
3. List the five areas of greatest strength as summarized from all worksheets.

## **Step 3**

### **Identify Congregational Goals**

1. Identify what you consider to be the five most important goals or needs of your congregation for the future.
2. Write the five goals or needs listing them in order of priority
3. Share the goals each person has listed and discuss all suggestions. Several goals may be related to the same concerns.
4. Identify three to four goals that have priority for the coming year. These goals can be shared with appropriate planning groups or your congregation council.

## **Step 4**

### **Strengthening the Ministry of the Pastor or Other Rostered Leader and the Mission of the Congregation**

1. In light of the summary of strengths and the priority goals, identify three specific directions or suggestions for continuing education for the pastor or other rostered leader during the next year which will enhance your ministry together. You might review “Components of a Continuing Education Curriculum” (Appendix 6) for possible ideas.
2. On the basis of insights derived from the “Reflections and Directions Worksheets” and in keeping with the goals of the congregation, the pastor or other rostered leader can make specific plans for continuing education.
3. These plans can be submitted to congregation council or to the mutual ministry committee (since only one or two members of the committee were in conversation with the pastor or other rostered leader). They can include descriptions of specific continuing education plans and programs; the relationship of plans to the ministry goals of pastor or other rostered leader and the mission goals of the congregation; and suggestions regarding funding, time, and follow-up evaluation.

4. A report and word of appreciation can be made to all those who participated in this model for evaluating ministry. It is through such sharing that we are able to strengthen our ministry together.

## **MODEL D: APPRAISING LEADERSHIP**

Competent, effective, faithful, and stimulating leadership is essential in the life of every congregation. Such leadership is needed from both professional leaders and laity. But what is a leader? Leaders give direction, set the pace, take initiative, study the issues, promote creativity, and generate enthusiasm. In today's Church, leaders are also sensitive to people and have an ability to work with, involve, and bring out the best in them. Some refer to this as "servant leadership.'

One difficulty every congregation faces is evaluating the degree to which such leadership is available to both the congregation and the community. Appraising Leadership offers a way to identify key components of church leadership and to discuss how those elements can be strengthened where they are weak and affirmed where they are strong.

There are some assumptions behind this evaluation model:

First, it is assumed that the pastor, other rostered leader, or lay members of the mutual ministry committee have developed sufficient trust to explore openly together the dynamics of leadership.

Second, there are some situations in which leadership is to be shared and other situations in which it is appropriate that certain individuals, lay or clergy, or certain groups have the initiative. Some situations where the pastor or the council has the sole initiative, for example, are defined in the model constitution for congregations and perhaps other documents.

A third operative assumption is that leadership involves envisioning, goal setting, and communication processes and is, therefore, more than a matter of just implementing or managing programs developed by others.

### **Objective and Participants**

This evaluation model will help professional leaders and congregations examine leadership together. The process is designed to answer questions such as:

- Who makes the decisions?
- How are decisions made?
- Where is leadership needed?

The pastor, or other rostered leader, and the mutual ministry committee participate in this process.

Where there is a staff situation involving more than one pastor and other rostered leaders, it is recommended that separate evaluation forms be completed for each person.

### **Materials**

Every participant involved in appraising leadership will need a copy of this model. You will also need masking tape and a surface on which to post profile charts. Newsprint and felt-tip markers, chalkboard and chalk, or some electronic means should be available so that the group can identify and note conclusions that flow from the discussion.

### **Steps in Evaluating Mutual Ministry by Appraising Leadership:**

**Step 1.** Each participant completes the “Appraising Leadership Worksheet” (See Appendix 7) by circling the one descriptive term that in his or her personal opinion best answers each question (approximately 20 minutes).

**NOTE:** The group can save time if worksheets and profile charts are distributed in advance along with instructions to complete Steps 1 and 2.

**Step 2.** Each person then transfers his or her choices to the profile chart (appendix 8) by circling the numbers of the questions in the appropriate column. After 27 numbers have been circled, connect the circles with straight lines moving from number 1 to number 27. A master profile incorporating all individual responses can then be made on newsprint which has columns A, B, C, and D marked across the top and numbers 1 through 27 marked down the left side.

Each participant, using a different color marker, puts an X for each question in the column that contained the answer he/she selected.

**ALTERNATE METHOD:** An alternate way to combine responses is to use the numbers 1 through 4 noted in parentheses at the top of columns A through D on the profile chart as scores. Each response in column A is given a score of 1; in column B each is given a score of 2; and so forth.

After each participant has marked his/her individual chart, transfer the scores to a master newsprint sheet, total the numbers for each question, and calculate an average by dividing the total score by the number of participants. For example, question 1 might receive scores of 2, 3, 4, 4, 4, 4 and 1 from a group of seven persons giving a total score of 22 and an average of 3.1.

**Step 3.** Interpret the results of the evaluation. Xs in columns A and B indicate areas of leadership or some aspects of leadership style that need strengthening. If you used the alternate method of scoring and finding the average, then those items with low averages are areas of leadership that need strengthening.

**Step 4.** Plan ways to strengthen leadership. Through group discussion and consensus, decide on three areas of leadership that need strengthening. Discuss any wide variations in the responses of individuals in the group. Determine whether the variance is due to a certain behavior or activity or due to how different individuals perceived a particular leadership matter.

After you have decided on three areas of leadership that need strengthening, develop a strategy for each by filling out the Worksheet for Step 4 (See Appendix 1).

## Summary of Evaluative Models A, B, C, & D

### Model A: Evaluating Ministry Utilizing an Anniversary

- This presents a natural time for reflection.
- Participants include pastor, staff, mutual ministry committee, and others involved in specific congregational ministry.
- Find answers to: Where are we now? How can we renew our ministry? How can we develop specific strategies?
- Utilize Appendix 1.

### Model B: Reflections on the Expectations for a Pastor and Congregational Council

- Participants include the pastor and the mutual ministry committee.
- Reflect on the *expectations* of the congregation for its leaders, both clergy and lay.
- Identify common expectations.
- Where there are differences of expectation, identify ways to reach a common understanding.
- Utilize Appendixes 2, 3, and 4.

### Model C: Reflection and Directions for Continuing Education of Pastors and Other Rostered Leaders within the ELCA

- Participants include the pastor and mutual ministry committee.
- Reflect on the responsibilities of pastors, strengths of the pastor, goals of the congregation, and areas of continuing education that might strengthen the congregation's ministry.
- Useful for identifying areas of continuing education that a pastor may not have considered, but that may be beneficial to the congregation's ministry.
- Prioritize three ministry goals.
- Utilize Appendixes 5 & 6.

### Model D: Appraising Leadership

- Helps pastors and congregations examine leadership together.
- This model is a somewhat complex process, therefore, it is probably better for more experienced mutual ministry committees, and is not the best one to start with.
- Identify leadership components, strengthen weak areas, and affirm strong areas.
- Need a high level of trust among the pastor and committee members.
- Answers the questions: Who makes decisions? How are decisions made? Where is leadership needed?
- Utilize Appendixes 7, 8, & 1.

**Appendix 1**  
**WORKSHEET FOR STEP 4**  
**Our Strategies for Renewing Our Ministry**

**WHAT?**

What is our strategy?

**WHY?**

Why do we need this?

How will our ministry be renewed?

**WHO?**

Who will be involved?

In what way?

**WHEN?**

When do we start?

When do we evaluate our effectiveness?

## Appendix 2

# MODEL CONSTITUTION FOR ELCA CONGREGATIONS REGARDING ORDAINED MINISTERS AND CONGREGATION COUNCILS

## Ordained Ministers

- \*C9.03.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
- a. Every ordained minister shall:
    - 1) preach the Word;
    - 2) administer the sacraments;
    - 3) conduct public worship;
    - 4) provide pastoral care; and
    - 5) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
  - b. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
    - 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
    - 2) supervise all schools and organizations of this congregation;
    - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
    - 4) with the council, administer discipline.
  - c. Every pastor shall:
    - 1) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
    - 2) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
    - 3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
    - 4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and of the Upper Susquehanna\_Synod of the ELCA.
- \*C9.04.** The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.

## Congregation Council

- C12.04.** The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:
- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
  - b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
  - c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.

- d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment.
- e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
- f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
- g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
- h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

**C12.05.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

- a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of [trustees] [directors] of this congregation, and as such shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
- c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for items not included in the budget.
- d. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations of more than \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.
- e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.
- f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

**C12.06.** The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution[,] [and] its bylaws[,] [and the continuing resolutions] are carried out.

**C12.07.** The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.

**C12.08.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this congregation.

**C12.09.** The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.

**C12.11.** The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, and shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.

## Appendix 3

### VISION AND EXPECTATIONS: ORDAINED MINISTERS

(Other statements are available at the ELCA website for other rostered leaders.)

*"Vision and Expectations — Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America" is a document which informs candidates for ordained ministry in this church, seminaries, congregations and candidacy committees regarding this church's vision for ordained ministry and the high expectations it places on those who serve in this way. It should not be confused with "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline." The latter is a juridical document that describes the grounds on which ordained ministers may be subject to the disciplinary process of this church.*

*This church has been called into mission in challenging times. It is important as we carry out this mission, that we remain faithful to the one who calls us into this work. "Vision and Expectations" makes clear that ordained ministry is a privilege granted by God through the call of the church. It is not an individual right.*

*If this church is to reach out with the gospel to all people, leaders must have a passion for evangelism, pastoral skills that have been refined in seminary and contextual settings, and personal character and integrity worthy of the office. This document outlines the importance of the ordained minister's faithfulness to this church's confession, leadership through faithful service and holy living, and faithful witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It sets forth the marks of healthy leadership which are essential to being a vital church in mission in a pluralistic context.*

Bishop Mark S. Hanson

*"Within the people of God and for the sake of the Gospel ministry entrusted to all believers, God has instituted the office of the ministry of Word and Sacrament. To carry out this ministry, this church calls and ordains qualified persons.*

*"An ordained minister of this church shall be a person whose commitment to Christ, soundness of faith, aptness to preach, teach and witness, and whose educational qualifications have been examined and approved in the manner prescribed in the documents of this church; who has been properly called and ordained; who accepts and adheres to the Confession of Faith of this church; who is diligent and faithful in the exercise of the ministry; and whose life and conduct are above reproach. A minister shall comply with the constitution of this church." Constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

Ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are called to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. Together with the whole people of God they are part of the ministry of the baptized. Ordained ministers are called to be faithful to Jesus Christ, knowledgeable of the Word of God and the Confessions of this church, respectful of the people of God, and responsive to the needs of a changing world. They are called to give

leadership to the congregations and other ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

In this document the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America seeks to state its vision and expectations for ordained ministers of this church. This document should not be understood as a juridical standard. Neither is it intended to suggest unrealistic or impossible expectations for those who serve on the roster of ordained ministers. Instead, it seeks to express the high value and importance that the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament has in the life of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It is offered for those who are already on the roster of ordained ministers of this church as a statement of expectations and hopes for the shape of ordained ministry, as well as an invitation for reflection and consideration to those who seek to serve in the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The four questions that are addressed to candidates in the Rite of Ordination (LBW Occasional Services, pp. 193-194) serve as the framework for this document. The liturgical rite itself is not the basis for this document, but the setting in which this church's understanding of its expectations for ordained ministers is described.

## **I. THE CALL TO ORDAINED MINISTRY**

*Before almighty God, to whom you must give account, and in the presence of this congregation, I ask: Will you assume this office, believing that the Church's call is God's call to the ministry of Word and Sacrament?*

*I will, and I ask God to help me.*

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America believes that the Holy Spirit "calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith" (Small Catechism, Article III). It is the Spirit that provides the church with those persons who are enabled by God to lead the church in carrying out the ministry and mission of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This church confesses that the office of ordained ministry, "the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments" (Augsburg Confession, Article V), has been instituted by God. Individuals are ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament because they have been called by God. This church believes that the call comes to individuals from God both personally and through the church.

Persons experience the call to ordained ministry through a variety of ways. Fundamental to each is the personal experience of God's justifying act in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is the awareness of the gospel in one's life, and the response to that gospel, that lead some to seek to serve in the public ministry of the church. This call may include the example and encouragement of others, the personal assessment of an individual's own interests and abilities, and response to the needs of the world. In whatever way the call to seek ordination may come to an individual, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in

America believes that such a sense of call must be tested over a period of time, shaped by theological study, and finally confirmed in the church's call to serve as a pastor. It is the Holy Spirit who enables the church to discern a person's gifts and abilities for ordained ministry.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America prepares and approves candidates for the ordained ministry by setting standards, by providing for theological education through the seminaries of this church, and by evaluating a person's qualifications for service by a Candidacy Committee. Upon approval for ordination, a person is eligible to receive a letter of call to serve in the ordained ministry of this church.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America therefore understands the call to the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament to mean that:

- Ordained ministers, called by God through the church, are accountable to the Word of God for the sake of the gospel of Jesus Christ;
- Ordained ministers are called by God through the church and are not self-chosen or self-appointed;
- Ordained ministers are called by God through the church for a ministry of servanthood, and not for the exercise of domination or coercive power; and
- Ordained ministry is a privilege granted by God through the call of the church and is not a right of the individual.
- 

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America expects each of its ordained ministers to understand and accept the call to serve the church's ministry of Word and Sacrament as a call from God, and to believe that the Spirit sustains and upholds those who are ordained so they may fulfill their calling to the ordained ministry.

*Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ was lifted high upon the cross so that he might draw the whole world to himself: Grant that we who glory in his death for our salvation may also glory in his call to take up our cross and follow him; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.*  
Prayer for Holy Cross Day, *Lutheran Book of Worship*

## **II. FAITHFULNESS TO THE CHURCH'S CONFESSION**

*The church in which you are to be ordained confesses that the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God and are the norm of its faith and life. We accept, teach, and confess the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds. We also acknowledge that the Lutheran Confessions are true witnesses and faithful expositions of the Holy Scriptures. Will you therefore preach and teach in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and these creeds and confessions? I will, and I ask God to help me.*

It is essential for an ordained minister to be able to understand and faithfully interpret the Scriptures and the Christian tradition. In this question the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America asks that its ordained ministers assume responsibility for upholding

this church's doctrinal tradition through faithful preaching and teaching. All who have been ordained and who serve as pastors in this church are expected to accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

### **Scripture, Creed and Confessions**

The Scriptures reveal God's redemptive actions, including the message of law and gospel, judgment and mercy, "beginning with the Word in Creation, continuing in the history of Israel and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ" (ELCA Constitution, 2.02). Ordained ministers of this church are to confess and teach the authoritative and normative character of the Scriptures "as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life" (ELCA Constitution, 2.03). The ecumenical creeds are to be taught as true declarations of the faith of this church. The Lutheran Confessions are to be acknowledged as true witnesses and faithful expositions of the Holy Scriptures.

In identifying specific documents as normative for preaching and teaching, this church expects its ordained ministers to understand that the faith of the church is corporate, not individualistic; catholic, not sectarian; orthodox, not heretical. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America expects that its ordained ministers teach nothing "that departs from the Scriptures or the catholic church" (Conclusion to the Augsburg Confession).

### **Doctrinal Tradition**

Christians enter into the catholic faith through baptism in the name of the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Ordained ministers of this church are called to continue in this catholic faith, preaching and teaching it within the doctrinal tradition of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Ordained ministers express this tradition when they are:

#### *Evangelical*

The gospel is the good news that the decisive turning point in human history occurred in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The evangelical witness is that in Christ, God has acted to bring forgiveness to sinners, liberation for the oppressed, reconciliation for the estranged, and the promise of salvation. It is the gospel that is the power of God to create and sustain the church for God's mission in the world. Ordained ministers of this church are expected to proclaim in word and deed God's saving gospel of justification by grace through faith, and so equip the baptized for their ministry in daily life.

#### *Faithful*

The church's Scriptures, creeds, and confessions identify the grounding and goals of the church's hope: Jesus Christ. The church expects its ordained ministers to be committed to Jesus who is the Christ, the Savior of the world, the Lord of the Church.

#### *Reforming*

The church's past is characterized not only by the faithful witness of the saints, but by sin,

error, and the betrayal of its mission. The gospel frees the church for genuine repentance and confession, for renewal and reform. Ordained ministers are expected to acknowledge the church's past and present failures and to lead the church in its repentance and renewal.

#### *Pastoral*

Leadership in the church is to be shaped by Jesus' own ministry of serving. This church, therefore, expects its ordained ministers to resist the temptation to seek power over people whether by force or manipulation and, instead, to lead God's people as servants. Such servant leadership is not one of weakness or timidity, but of strength and boldness.

#### *Ecumenical*

The church is called to "maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3). This church expects its ordained ministers to manifest the unity given to the people of God by leading the church in that common witness to the gospel that expresses the unity which the Spirit gives. Ordained ministers are encouraged to participate in ecumenical activities, including prayer and worship, and to witness to the "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all" (Ephesians 4:5 and 6).

#### *Ethical*

The church witnesses to the gospel not only in its proclamation but also by how it lives and acts. The church expects its ordained ministers to lead and teach the church through example by lives that give expression to the gospel. Ordained ministers are called to represent in their personal lives the new life that is given to all Christians in baptism, and to be examples of a life that is consistent with the gospel.

*Almighty God, through your Son Jesus Christ you gave the holy apostles many gifts and commanded them to feed your flock. Inspire all pastors to proclaim your Word diligently and your people to receive it willingly, that finally we may receive the crown of eternal glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Installation of a Pastor, Occasional Services*

### **III. THE ORDAINED MINISTER AS PERSON AND EXAMPLE**

*Will you be diligent in your study of the Holy Scriptures and in your use of the means of grace? Will you pray for God's people, nourish them with the Word and Holy Sacraments, and lead them by your own example in faithful service and holy living?  
I will, and I ask God to help me.*

The ordained minister is called with all Christians to "lead a life worthy of the gospel of Christ" (Philippians 1:27). It is Christ's own self-giving on the cross that is the example for Christian life for all believers.

Because ordained ministers are also recipients of God's gracious gift in Christ Jesus, they are called to use their gifts and abilities to enable others to understand themselves as recipients of that same grace and to live as God's people in the world. In their life and

conduct ordained ministers are to witness to the crucified and risen Jesus Christ. Therefore, ordained ministers will seek to use their gifts in lives worthy of the gospel of Christ.

Ordained ministers fulfill the calling of the pastoral office not only by what they do in carrying out certain tasks, but also in who they are. They both officially proclaim and in their person witness to the gospel of Christ. Pastoral identity is not one of moral or spiritual perfection. It is, instead, the living out of the good news that one is justified by God's grace and thus called to live out that grace in daily life. The ordained minister is not simply a professional trained in skills to perform a task, but is one sent by the church to lead the community of faith through the ministry of Word and Sacrament. The ordained minister enables and equips others in their lives as Christians and for their ministry in the world by faithful preaching of the Word of God, through the administration of the sacraments, and by example.

Pastoral identity carries with it expectations and accountabilities that are determined by the whole church and not simply by a given congregation, synod, institution, or agency served by the ordained minister.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has high expectations for those who serve within the ordained ministry of this church. It does so because it recognizes that when offense is given by an ordained minister, the witness of the gospel may be impaired and the ability to carry out public ministry is threatened.

Yet sin and brokenness is a reality in the lives of all persons, including those who serve as ordained ministers. It is crucial for us all to remember that repentance and forgiveness are to be daily realities in the life of every baptized Christian. Neither perfection nor self-righteousness is asked of the ordained ministers of this church. When there is failure in the lives of those who serve in this office, this church seeks to provide counsel and understanding. When there are repentance and forgiveness, this church rejoices. Indeed, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America believes that God not only calls but sustains those who are set aside for the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament. It is with this recognition that this church can affirm that those who are set apart to the office of Word and Sacrament are to seek to embody those characteristics which are consistent with the pastoral office.

The ordained minister is to nourish the people of God through the Word and sacraments. In order to do this, the ordained minister needs to develop and nurture a sound knowledge of the Scriptures, both intellectually and devotionally. The ordained minister will seek regular opportunities for personal participation in the means of grace, including the renewal of baptismal grace in individual confession and absolution, and to celebrate and receive the sacrament of Holy Communion, thus receiving God's renewing, sustaining, empowering Spirit both personally and in the practice of ministry.

The ordained minister engages in daily prayer and encourages others in the practice of regular prayer.

The ordained minister must be a member of a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As a member of such a community of faith, the ordained minister is an integral part of a community in which mutual support is given and in which care, forgiveness, and healing occur.

The ordained minister supports not only the work of the congregation, but also the synodical and churchwide ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This church expects its ordained ministers to work in a collegial relationship with one another and to share in mutual accountability with those in positions of leadership and oversight in this church. The ordained ministers of this church are to seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the gospel and strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community.

The ordained minister is concerned for the whole person and provides for the care of those troubled with spiritual or emotional problems. This church expects that its ordained ministers will honor and respect privileged communication, particularly within the context of individual confession and absolution, and will not disclose such communication except with the express permission of the person who has confided it or if the person is perceived to intend great harm to self or others.

The ordained minister recognizes the importance of life-long growth in learning. Such growth is intended to renew, extend, and deepen insight into the Scriptures and the doctrinal teaching of the church, and to enable one to respond to the insights and challenges of the world with greater awareness and a more faithful confession. In an increasingly complex and educated society, the development of an informed intellect and professional skills is crucial to competent ordained ministry.

This church expects of its ordained ministers regular and disciplined time for personal study, study in the company of others, participation in programs of continuing education, and periodic times for extended study. Congregations and other entities of this church are expected to provide the ordained minister the time and assistance with the financial resources needed for such study.

The ordained minister needs to be an example of self-care, as well as caring for others. The significant demands of time and effort within the office of ordained ministry can lead one to neglect proper nutrition, exercise, and time for recreation. The congregation, or whatever agency or institution the ordained minister serves, should respect the need for the ordained minister to have adequate time for self-care. Caring for self also includes seeking counseling and/or medical care when there is evidence of physical or mental illness, substance abuse, eating disorders, or relational problems.

The ordained minister is expected to be fiscally responsible and is to be a faithful steward of time, talents, and possessions. The ordained minister is to be an example to the community of generous giving.

The ordained minister is to be an example of holy living, so that the ordained minister's life does not become an impediment to the hearing of the gospel or a scandal to the community of faith. The qualities of such a life include the following:

#### *Responsibility to family*

Ordained ministers, whether married or single, are expected to uphold an understanding of marriage in their public ministry as well as in private life that is biblically informed and consistent with the teachings of this church. Spouse and children, if any, are to be regarded with love, respect, and commitment. Within the family, forgiveness, reconciliation, healing, and mutual care are to be expressed. It is also expected that ordained ministers maintain responsible relationships with their parents and other immediate relatives.

#### *Separation, Divorce and Remarriage*

Ordained ministers are expected to keep their marriage inviolate until death, to cultivate love and respect for their spouse, and to seek marital counseling when it is needed. It is recognized that due to human sin and brokenness, in some cases the marital relationship may have to be dissolved. Should an ordained minister and spouse seek to divorce, the counsel and guidance of the synodical bishop is to be sought. Similarly, should an ordained minister decide to marry following a divorce, the counsel and guidance of the synodical bishop is to be sought.

#### *Sexual conduct*

The expectations of this church regarding the sexual conduct of its ordained ministers are grounded in the understanding that human sexuality is a gift from God and that ordained ministers are to live in such a way as to honor this gift. Ordained ministers are expected to reject sexual promiscuity, the manipulation of others for purposes of sexual gratification, and all attempts of sexual seduction and sexual harassment, including taking physical or emotional advantage of others. Single ordained ministers are expected to live a chaste life. Married ordained ministers are expected to live in fidelity to their spouses, giving expression to sexual intimacy within a marriage relationship that is mutual, chaste, and faithful. Ordained ministers who are homosexual in their self-understanding are expected to abstain from homosexual sexual relationships.

*Almighty God, by our baptism into the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ, you turn us from the old life of sin. Grant that we who are reborn to new life in him may live in righteousness and holiness all our days, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*Prayer for Renewal, Lutheran Book of Worship*

#### IV. FAITHFUL WITNESS

*Will you give faithful witness to the world, that God's love may be known in all that you do? I will, and I ask God to help me.*

The charge to witness to the world is given to the church today as it was to the apostles of the early church. The content of that witness is God's revelation in Jesus Christ: God's creative self-disclosure as the Word made flesh; Jesus Christ victorious over death for the salvation of God's people; and the promise of everlasting life. The testimony of these acts of God's grace and forgiveness is expressed in both word and deed by ordained ministers through compassion, hospitality, patience, and forgiveness; through seeking peace and justice for all people; through care for God's creation; and through sharing one's faith through preaching, teaching, and personal witness. This witness is characterized by:

##### *Evangelism*

The apostolic witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ is at the heart of the church's mission. It is the proclamation of the message of salvation in Jesus Christ and reconciliation with God. This gospel is proclaimed through preaching the Word and administration of the Sacraments. Through its ordained ministers, this church affirms the critically important task of communicating this evangelical word to the world.

##### *Compassion*

Christians are called by God to participate in compassionate care for those in need. This church expects its ordained ministers to follow the example of Jesus and to lead the church in compassionate care of the suffering.

##### *Confession*

Ordained ministers are expected to enter into the church's act of confessing the Christian faith in our world. The church is called to such a confession because its present existence lies between the advent of God's Kingdom in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ and the promised certain consummation of the eschatological kingdom. This confession places this church and its ordained ministers in the struggle against sin, death, and the devil.

##### *Hospitality*

Just as Jesus received sinners and ate with them, the church is called to welcome the stranger and to open its life to those who are "outside" and alienated. This church expects its ordained ministers to be models of appropriate hospitality in their personal lives, to preside at the Eucharistic table where God welcomes sinners, and to lead the church in its witness to divine hospitality.

##### *Peacemaking*

The culmination of God's eschatological salvation will be the overcoming of every enmity and the reconciliation of the whole creation. Yet even in the present time, God's peace is a

reality. This church expects its ordained ministers to be witnesses to and instruments of God's peace and reconciliation for the world.

### *Justice*

The church is to witness to God's call for justice in every aspect of life, including testimony against injustice and oppression, whether personal or systemic. This church expects its ordained ministers to be committed to justice in the life of the church, in society, and in the world.

### *Stewardship of the Earth*

The people of God are called to the care and redemption of all that God has made. In our time this includes the need to speak on behalf of this earth, its environment and natural resources, and its inhabitants. This church expects that its ordained ministers will be exemplary stewards of the earth's resources, and that they will lead this church in the stewardship of God's creation.

### *Trustworthiness*

It is essential in the life of the ordained minister that one be trustworthy. It is a quality that allows the people of God to entrust leadership within the community of faith and to commit to the ordained minister the responsibilities of faithful preaching, responsible teaching, and confidentiality in individual confession and counseling.

*Almighty God, you sent your Son to proclaim your kingdom and to teach with authority. Anoint us with the power of your Spirit, that we, too, may bring good news to the afflicted, bind up the brokenhearted, and proclaim liberty to the captive; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Prayer for the Third Sunday after Epiphany, Lutheran Book of Worship*

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America affirms that "the Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world" (ELCA Constitution, 4.01). This church expects its ordained ministers to honor and equip the baptized for their ministry in the world. Such a ministry involves giving leadership in the church's witness to the world, exhibiting awareness of the global challenges of a multicultural, diverse society, and enabling the members of this church, through the faithful teaching and preaching of the Word of God and the administration of the sacraments, for their ministry in daily life.

At the same time the ordained ministers of this church can know that they are regarded as servants of Christ and messengers of the good news of God's salvation in Christ. As such they are honored for the ministry they bring to this church. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America prays for the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit to those who serve this church in the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament.

*Almighty and merciful God, you built your Church on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and you instituted the office of holy ministry so that the apostolic and prophetic Word might be heard throughout the ages. Grant that those who are ordained may exercise their ministry faithfully in the power of your Spirit; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen* Service of Ordination, Occasional Services

## Appendix 4

### REFLECTION WORKSHEET

This worksheet is based on the constitution's description of the pastor's and congregation council's roles.

Place an "X" in the column next to each item on the following pages, indicating how you evaluate the "importance" and "effectiveness" of each one.

"Importance" shows how important you believe that quality, skill, characteristic, attribute, role, etc. is for a pastor. For example, how important is it to you that the pastor "shall preach the Word." Is it very important, somewhat important, somewhat unimportant, or not important? How important is it to you that the congregation council lead your congregation in stating its mission...doing long-range planning...setting goals and priorities, and...evaluating its activities in light of its mission and goals?

"Effectiveness" shows how effectively you believe your pastor and congregation council carry out the quality, skill, characteristic, attribute, role, etc. in your congregation. For example, how effective is the congregation council in leading your congregation in stating its mission...doing long-range planning...setting goals and priorities, and...evaluating its activities in light of its mission and goals? Is it very effective, moderately effective, less effective, or do you not know, or does it not apply? How effective is your pastor in preaching the Word?

| <b>The pastor shall:</b>  | Very Important | Somewhat important | Somewhat unimportant | Not important |  | Very effective | Moderately effective | Less effective | Do not know or Does not apply |
|---|----------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------|--|----------------|----------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|
| Preach the Word   |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Administer the sacraments   |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Conduct public worship  |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Provide pastoral care   |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Speak publically to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world                         |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead   |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Supervise all schools and organizations of this congregation  |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council   |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| With the council, administer discipline   |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad   |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel  |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications   |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the Churchwide organization the ELCA and of the Upper Susquehanna Synod of the ELCA |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |

| <b>The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:</b>  | Very Important | Somewhat important | Somewhat unimportant | Not important |  | Very effective | Moderately effective | Less effective | Do not know or Does not apply |
|---|----------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------|--|----------------|----------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|
| Lead this congregation in stating its mission, do long-range planning, set goals and priorities, and evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals  |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support  |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission   |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment  |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons   |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, endeavor to foster mutual understanding.   |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor   |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Emphasize partnership with the Upper Susquehanna Synod and Churchwide organization of the ELCA as well as cooperate with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and ELCA |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Approve and encourage the use of program resource produced or approved by the ELCA  |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |
| Seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel  |                |                    |                      |               |  |                |                      |                |                               |

## Appendix 5

### REFLECTIONS AND DIRECTIONS WORKSHEET

The thirty-six items below cluster around the five ministry functions of the congregation: worship, learning, witness, service, and support.

Rate your pastor's or other rostered leader's strengths and competencies using the following designations:

- 1 very effective;
- 2 moderately effective;
- 3 less effective;
- 4 do not know or does not apply.

#### ITEMS FOR REFLECTION RATING

(Circle one)

##### Worship

- 1. Evidence of personal spiritual and devotional life 1 2 3 4
- 2. Preaching and/or speaking before groups 1 2 3 4
- 3. Developing and encouraging music within the church 1 2 3 4
- 4. Ability as a worship leader 1 2 3 4

##### Learning

- 5. Teaching the Bible 1 2 3 4
- 6. Interpreting current issues in our society and the world 1 2 3 4
- 7. Teaching children and youth 1 2 3 4
- 8. Teaching adults 1 2 3 4
- 9. Helping others plan for a balance between work and leisure 1 2 3 4
- 10. Teaching Lutheran history, theology, and an understanding of worship  
1 2 3 4

##### Witness

- 11. Witness through personal or family life-style 1 2 3 4
- 12. Training persons in evangelism and community outreach 1 2 3 4
- 13. Personal use of time 1 2 3 4
- 14. Combining personal goals for ministry with congregational goals 1 2 3 4
- 15. Enabling persons to witness in their everyday life 1 2 3 4
- 16. Participation in synodical and ELCA themes and concerns 1 2 3 4
- 17. Involvement in ecumenical and community activities 1 2 3 4

##### Service

- 18. Relating Christian faith to society, politics, and world politics 1 2 3 4
- 19. Talking with people about moral and personal problems 1 2 3 4

20. Assisting people with major decisions such as career, marriage, education, and divorce, 1 2 3 4
21. Ministry with children 1 2 3 4
22. Ministry with youth 1 2 3 4
23. Ministry with adults 1 2 3 4
24. Ministry with older adults 1 2 3 4
25. Helping persons deal with current social issues 1 2 3 4
26. Providing enrichment for both single and married persons 1 2 3 4

### **Support**

27. Planning for congregational life and mission 1 2 3 4
28. Skilled in working with groups and volunteers 1 2 3 4
29. Coping with conflicts within the congregation 1 2 3 4
30. Skilled in church administration and development of programs 1 2 3 4
31. Leadership in stewardship 1 2 3 4
32. Ability to introduce and implement change 1 2 3 4
33. Maintaining, training, and affirming leadership in the congregation 1 2 3 4
34. Motivating, training, and affirming leadership in the congregation 2 3 4
35. Planning for the future in his/her own life and ministry 1 2 3 4
36. Building a sense of mutual or shared ministry with all members 1 2 3 4

## Appendix 6

# COMPONENTS OF CONTINUING EDUCATION CURRICULUM FOR PASTORS AND LAY PROFESSIONALS IN THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

The five components listed below can serve as a convenient way to evaluate and plan one's personal continuing education. The components can also serve as a guideline for congregations as they work with professional leaders in developing a holistic program of continuing growth and education.

Continuing education can be accomplished through workshops, classes, retreats, guided groups, or supervised individual study. Whatever the format, continuing education needs to further the individual's goals for ministry and advance the mission of the church.

The five components provide a structure for continuing education. Although these components are distinguished from one another here for the sake of clarity, in practice they are closely linked together. Involvement in one of these components will normally have an impact on one's understanding of the others.

These components function as a guide in planning continuing education. They are also to assist the ELCA's continuing education centers, synods, colleges, and seminaries in offering a full range of continuing education programs and events.

### 1. **Biblical Studies and Systematic Theology**

Growth in knowledge and articulation of the Christian faith and the Lutheran heritage.

*Example:* Old Testament, New Testament, Lutheran Confessions, ethics, theology and worship.

### 2. **Personal and Spiritual Growth**

Growth in personal and spiritual maturity.

*Example:* Interpersonal relationships, sexuality, marriage, communication, prayer, spiritual discipline, and devotional literature.

### 3. **Skills for Ministry**

Growth in leadership and function in ministry.

*Example:* Administration, time management, conflict utilization, planning, preaching, teaching counseling, visiting, leading worship, clinical pastoral education, and care giving.

### 4. **Issues in Church and Society**

Growth in reflection and action for ministry in today's world and in relating to other religious traditions.

*Examples:* Small membership congregations, urban and rural ministry, abortion, AIDS, human rights, racism, world hunger, overpopulation, peace nuclear armament, and ecumenical relationships.

#### **5. Development and Assessment of Ministry**

Growth in planning for dealing with changes within life and career.

*Examples;* Call and appointment review, ministry assessment, mobility, transition, ministry goals, and retirement.

## Appendix 7

### APPRAISING LEADERSHIP WORKSHEET FOR STEP 1

Circle one response for each question:

1. Who makes major policy decisions for the congregation?
  - a. Professional leader(s) alone (e.g. pastor, other staff members)
  - b. A few key members of the congregation council and professional leader(s)
  - c. The council as a whole
  - d. The council and professional leaders
  
2. At what levels are other decisions such as program development and expenditures made?
  - a. Mostly by professional leader(s)
  - b. Some delegation to the congregation council
  - c. Broad policy by professional leader(s), decisions by council
  - d. Shared decision making well-integrated throughout congregation, professional leader(s), council, and committees
  
3. How is the budget developed?
  - a. Professional leader(s)
  - b. A few lay leaders
  - c. Finance Committee and professional leader(s)
  - d. Council, professional leader(s), congregation all share
  
4. Is there an informal organization (e.g., a clique or subgroup) resisting a formal one?
  - a. Always
  - b. Often
  - c. Sometimes
  - d. Rarely
  
5. How adequate is interpersonal communication in the parish?
  - a. Inadequate
  - b. Acceptable
  - c. Good
  - d. Excellent
  
6. How adequate is communication of parish programs and goals with the congregation?
  - a. Inadequate
  - b. Acceptable
  - c. Good
  - d. Excellent

7. How are goals developed?
  - a. By professional leader(s)
  - b. A few lay leaders
  - c. Council and professional leader(s)
  - d. Planning group and professional leader(s)
  
8. How much support from the congregation is there for goals once they are adopted?
  - a. Little
  - b. Some
  - c. Moderate
  - d. Strong
  
9. Once made, how are parish goals advanced?
  - a. Mandate
  - b. Mandate with comment invited
  - c. Mandate after discussion
  - d. Discussion and consensus
  
10. What leadership style does the professional leader generally use?
  - a. Tells
  - b. Sells
  - c. Consults
  - d. Collaborates
  
11. How much leadership initiative does the professional leader generally take?
  - a. None
  - b. Little
  - c. Some
  - d. Appropriate amount
  
12. How much leadership initiative do lay members assume?
  - a. None
  - b. Little
  - c. Some
  - d. Appropriate amount
  
13. Considering the five functions of the congregation, how well is professional leadership carried out in each area? (Worship, Learning, Witness, Service, Support) Respond to each area separately using the criteria immediately below:
  - a. Not well
  - b. Adequately
  - c. Well
  - d. Extremely well

14. Considering the five functions of the congregation, how well is lay leadership carried out in each area? (Worship, Learning, Witness, Service, Support) Respond to each area separately using the criteria immediately below:
  - a. Not well
  - b. Adequately
  - c. Well
  - d. Extremely well
  
15. Are the various committee and group leaders involved in decisions related to the tasks of their group?
  - a. Not at all
  - b. Adequately
  - c. Well
  - d. Extremely well
  
16. Do the various committee and group leaders involve the professional leader in decisions related to the group's tasks?
  - a. Not at all
  - b. Occasionally consulted
  - c. Generally consulted
  - d. Decisions are shared
  
17. Where is responsibility felt for achieving/advancing parish goals?
  - a. Mostly by the professional leader
  - b. Professional leader and a few lay leaders
  - c. Professional leader and council
  - d. Generally shared throughout congregation
  
18. How sensitive are the professional leader and leadership groups such as the council to one another?
  - a. Little
  - b. Somewhat
  - c. Quite
  - d. Very
  
19. How is dissent dealt with?
  - a. Dismissed
  - b. Responded to defensively
  - c. Attempts made to convert to agreement
  - d. Received, welcomed, and responded to openly

20. How rigid are lay members in their expectations of the kinds of things (roles) the professional leader should do?
- a. Very rigid
  - b. Fairly rigid
  - c. Somewhat flexible
  - d. Flexible
21. Is there a clear understanding and distinction between the roles of the professional leader and those of the laity?
- a. Not clear
  - b. Somewhat clear
  - c. Clear
  - d. Very clear
22. Is the ministry of laity in the community and through their work and home life recognized and affirmed?
- a. Never
  - b. Rarely
  - c. Considerably
  - d. Strongly
23. Are resources and programs provided to support and strengthen ministry of laity in community and through their work and home life?
- a. Never
  - b. Rarely
  - c. Frequently
  - d. Constantly
24. Are lay leadership and service so oriented to the needs of the congregation that time and energy is not available for ministries outside the church?
- a. Definitely
  - b. Considerably
  - c. Somewhat
  - d. A good balance exists
25. How much confidence does the professional leader show in the laity?
- a. None
  - b. Some
  - c. Substantial
  - d. Complete

26. How much confidence is shown by the congregation in the professional leader?
- a. None
  - b. Some
  - c. Substantial
  - d. Complete
27. How free do members feel to talk with the professional leader?
- a. Not at all
  - b. Not very
  - c. Rather free
  - d. Completely free

## Appendix 8

### Profile Chart for Step 2

| A (1) | B (2) | C (3) | D (4) |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1.    | 1.    | 1.    | 1.    |
| 2.    | 2.    | 2.    | 2.    |
| 3.    | 3.    | 3.    | 3.    |
| 4.    | 4.    | 4.    | 4.    |
| 5.    | 5.    | 5.    | 5.    |
| 6.    | 6.    | 6.    | 6.    |
| 7.    | 7.    | 7.    | 7.    |
| 8.    | 8.    | 8.    | 8.    |
| 9.    | 9.    | 9.    | 9.    |
| 10.   | 10.   | 10.   | 10.   |
| 11.   | 11.   | 11.   | 11.   |
| 12.   | 12.   | 12.   | 12.   |
| 13a.  | 13a.  | 13a.  | 13a.  |
| 13b.  | 13b.  | 13b.  | 13b.  |
| 13c.  | 13c.  | 13c.  | 13c.  |
| 13d.  | 13d.  | 13d.  | 13d.  |
| 13e.  | 13e.  | 13e.  | 13e.  |
| 14a.  | 14a.  | 14a.  | 14a.  |
| 14b.  | 14b.  | 14b.  | 14b.  |
| 14c.  | 14c.  | 14c.  | 14c.  |
| 14d.  | 14d.  | 14d.  | 14d.  |
| 14e.  | 14e.  | 14e.  | 14e.  |
| 15.   | 15.   | 15.   | 15.   |
| 16.   | 16.   | 16.   | 16.   |
| 17.   | 17.   | 17.   | 17.   |
| 18.   | 18.   | 18.   | 18.   |
| 19.   | 19.   | 19.   | 19.   |
| 20.   | 20.   | 20.   | 20.   |
| 21.   | 21.   | 21.   | 21.   |
| 22.   | 22.   | 22.   | 22.   |
| 23.   | 23.   | 23.   | 23.   |
| 24.   | 24.   | 24.   | 24.   |
| 25.   | 25.   | 25.   | 25.   |
| 26.   | 26.   | 26.   | 26.   |
| 27.   | 27.   | 27.   | 27.   |

## APPENDIX 9

### GLOSSARY OF TERMS

#### 1. Call

Because of God's love for the world, we notice the world around us and the needs of our neighbors. The world's needs call out our gifts in service to our neighbor. This is the vocation of all the baptized as we live out our callings in the world. For some, the world's needs call them to ordained ministry or other professional service under call in the Church. This call comes from God for the sake of the world and is confirmed by the Church.

Called leaders in the Church are not hired by congregations. Their calling by God may require them to engage in ministries that a particular congregation may resist. Pastors are called to be servants of Christ and the mission he has entrusted to the Church. They are not hired to do a specific congregation's bidding but rather Christ's bidding. When a congregation calls a pastor, they believe this is a person who has been called by God and the Church and who will well serve God and his people in, with, and through their congregation. (See Vision and Expectations, Section I in Appendix 3 of this document.)

#### 2. Focus Group

A focus group is a small group of people whose response to something new is studied to determine the response that can be expected from a larger population. Consumer products are often tested by a focus group to assess how the public may react prior to it being introduced. A mutual ministry committee may be used as a focus group in order to respond to a new idea prior to its being introduced to the congregation.

#### 3. Hire

A hired person is paid to do another's bidding. Someone may be hired by a congregation to mow the grass. This person is hired to do what the congregation needs to be done. If they fail to mow the grass as hired, they may be fired.

#### 4. Model Constitution for Congregations

The Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America originally was adopted by the Constituting Convention of this church in Columbus, Ohio, on April 30, 1987. The current edition of the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is available online (<http://www.elca.org/Who-We-Are/Our-Three-Expressions/Churchwide-Organization/Office-of-the-Secretary/Congregation-Administration/Model-Constitution-for-Congregations.aspx>) and contains changes adopted by

subsequent Churchwide Assemblies. All congregations of the ELCA are to use this document in creating and/or revising their own constitutions. The Synod's Constitution Committee must review a congregation's constitution prior to it being adopted by the congregation. Asterisked items (\*) in the Model Constitution are required of all congregations in the ELCA and may not be modified. Non-asterisked items may be excluded or modified by local congregations.

## **5. Personnel Committee**

A personnel committee often has the responsibility for submitting recommendations on personnel policies to the congregation council. Such policies may address issues such as sick leave and vacations. It may be given the authority to hire and fire non-rostered staff members and to provide advice in the areas of training, employee benefits, employee relations, legal issues relating to employees, recruitment, interviewing, selection procedures, and the like. The official call of rostered leaders addresses many personnel related matters, such as sick leave and vacation. It takes precedence over other personnel policies. This committee may be given the responsibility of reviewing the staffing pattern and of making recommendations regarding salaries and benefits.

## **6. Reconciliation Team**

The Reconciliation Team of the Upper Susquehanna Synod is a resource team available to congregations who face situations of conflict which have not been reconciled. The team does not impose solutions, but rather accompanies aggrieved parties in seeking reconciliation. The team may provide advice, referral to other resources, or direct intervention. It consists of 10-12 members, including a chairperson, all of whom are appointed by the bishop with the consent of the Synod Council. Team members receive training in the process of church consultation, such as systems theory, conflict resolution, managing change, and grief.

## **7. Rostered Leaders**

Leaders who have been called to serve in the ELCA serve on one of four "rosters" (lists) to carry out the ministry and mission of the church, sharing God's boundless love with the world. Ordained leaders are called "pastors," and there are also three additional types of lay rostered leaders: Associates in Ministry, Diaconal Ministers, Deaconesses. For additional information, check the ELCA website at: <http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Vocation/Rostered-Leadership.aspx>

## **8. Transition Committee/Team**

A transition committee assists a newly called pastor in becoming oriented to the new community and congregation. In the Call Committee Manual provided by this synod, Call Committee members are alerted to the fact that a newly called pastor may ask some or all of the call committee members to serve on the Transition

Committee for approximately six to twelve months until a mutual ministry committee is appointed. Until such time, the transition committee may serve as a temporary mutual ministry team.

## **9. Vision and Expectations**

"Vision and Expectations" is an ELCA document which informs candidates for ordained ministry in this church, seminaries, congregations and candidacy committees regarding this church's vision for ordained ministry and the high expectations it places on those who serve in this way. "Vision and Expectations" makes clear that ordained ministry is a privilege granted by God through the call of the Church. It is not an individual right. This document outlines the importance of the ordained minister's faithfulness to this church's confession, leadership through faithful service and holy living, and faithful witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It sets forth the marks of healthy leadership which are essential to being a vital church in mission in a pluralistic context.

Original materials, and a major adaptation of "Congregational Mutual Ministry Committee," the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, with a few ideas from "Intern Committee Manual," 2009-2010 edition, the Eastern Cluster of ELCA Seminaries.