



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

Ministry Transitions
Guide for Congregation Councils When a Pastor Resigns
(Revised August 5, 2021)

Contents

<i>RESIGNATION OR RETIREMENT OF THE PASTOR.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>PLAN FOR PASTORAL MINISTRY DURING THE TRANSITION.</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>A. PROVIDING FOR INTERIM MINISTRY.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>B. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INTERIM PASTOR AND CONGREGATION.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>C. COMPENSATION OF THE INTERIM PASTOR.</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>D. AUTHORITY OF THE INTERIM PASTOR.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>F. CLOSURE OF THE INTERIM RELATIONSHIP.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>G. OTHER PASTORS' RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE CONGREGATION.</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>H. SUPPLY PASTORS/ AUTHORIZED LAY WORSHIP LEADERS.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>EXPECTATIONS DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>THE CALL PROCESS</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>A. MEETING TO REVIEW THE CALL PROCESS.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>B. DEVELOPMENT OF MINISTRY SITE PROFILE.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>C. PLAN FOR THE SELECTION OF A CALL COMMITTEE.</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>D. INTERVIEW PROCESS</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>E. MINISTRY EVALUATION</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>APPENDIX 1 – CONGREGATION WORSHIP INFORMATION SHEET</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>APPENDIX 2 - LETTER CERTIFYING THAT CHURCH RECORDS ARE IN ORDER.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>APPENDIX 3 - EXIT INTERVIEW FOR PASTOR.....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>APPENDIX 4 - EXIT INTERVIEW FOR CONGREGATION</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>APPENDIX 5 - A COVENANT OF CLOSURE</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>APPENDIX 6 - A COVENANT OF CLOSURE:.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>APPENDIX 7 - SERVICES OF FAREWELL AND GODSPEED.....</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>APPENDIX 8 – LITURGY OF THANKSGIVING AT THE CONCLUSION OF AN INTERIM.....</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>APPENDIX 9 - THANKSGIVING AT THE CONCLUSION OF A CALL</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>APPENDIX 10 - COUNCIL WORKSHEET FOR REGULAR INTERIM PASTOR.....</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>APPENDIX 11 - AGREEMENT FOR REGULAR INTERIM PASTOR</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>APPENDIX 12: LETTER OF CALL.....</i>	<i>29</i>

Pastoral transitions occur whenever a pastor ends her/his call, whether through resignation, retirement or other circumstance. For both the pastor and the congregation, these transitions bring opportunities and challenges. These guidelines are meant to assist congregations navigating the transition time until they have called a new pastor.

Chapter 9 of the Model Constitution for Congregations of the ELCA and chapter 14 of the Constitution for Synods of the ELCA govern calls to pastors and should be consulted along with this guide.

RESIGNATION OR RETIREMENT OF THE PASTOR

- A. THE PASTOR**, upon resignation/retirement decision, sends a copy of the letter of resignation to the congregation council and to the bishop.
- B. THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL (JOINT COUNCIL)**, at a regular or special meeting, receives the pastor's letter of resignation. The letter of resignation is sent promptly to the entire congregation, preferably so that the congregation receives it the day after the council is informed of the resignation. The congregation is notified of the ending date of service of the pastor and perhaps a word of thanks for the gifts of ministry that have been shared. Most pastors and congregations need approximately four weeks (30 days) to complete ministry tasks and say good-bye. The Model Constitution for Congregations (C9.05.a.) states that resignations generally take effect no more than thirty days from submission. Upon mutual agreement, and with the consent of the bishop, this could last up to six weeks or more, depending upon circumstances.
- C. THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT** contacts the bishop's office to arrange for a meeting of the council with the bishop or assistant. If the bishop is not already aware of the impending resignation, the council president will communicate the pastor's resignation and its effective date. When possible, the bishop or assistant will attend the council meeting when the pastor announces her/his resignation to discuss the council's next steps.

The president of the council, in consultation with the bishop or a member of the bishop's staff, arranges for appropriate coverage between the time of the pastor's resignation and the arrival of an interim pastor. If supply pastors are needed, the schedule will be arranged in consultation between the bishop's office and the synod's supply scheduler.
- D. THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL SECRETARY** reviews the congregation's membership records with the pastor and dean and determines that they are up to date. *The synod constitution specifies that the parochial records must be in good order before a pastor can be installed at another call.* With the conference dean or other designee of the bishop, complete the form in Appendix 2 and return to the synod office.
- E. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS** between the pastor and congregation are settled. This includes any salary or benefits due. The pastor likewise settles any debts owed to the congregation. (Included on the form in Appendix 2)
- F. AN EXIT INTERVIEW** with the pastor may be planned by the congregation council: This should include the conference dean, a synod council member or synod staff. (Sometimes it is necessary to have separate exit interviews for pastor

and council.) Suggestions for exit interview questions are provided (Appendices 3 & 4). The purpose of the interview is to evaluate the ministry, to identify areas of potential growth for the pastor and congregation, and to celebrate the ministry. If an exit interview is conducted, please share a copy with the bishop.

- G. A COVENANT OF CLOSURE** (Appendices 5 & 6) indicating that the rostered leader's ministry at the congregation has ended is recommended. This covenant defines the new relationship between the rostered leader and the congregation.
- H. THE CONGREGATION'S CONSTITUTION** needs to be up to date prior to calling a new pastor. If assistance is needed, contact the Synod's Constitution Committee. It is advisable to submit any amendments first to the Synod's Constitution Committee before bringing them to the congregation. Amendments to the constitution must be submitted following adoption by the congregation to the Constitution Committee for final approval.
- I. A CELEBRATION** is planned to mark the end of the pastor's ministry and to provide the opportunity for saying "thank-you" and "good-bye." A Service of Farewell and Godspeed is appropriate to use as a part of the liturgy on the pastor's last Sunday with the congregation (Appendices 7-9).

PLAN FOR PASTORAL MINISTRY DURING THE TRANSITION.

SI3.11.01. In the event of a pastoral vacancy in a congregation or pastoral charge, the bishop shall appoint an interim pastor in consultation with the conference dean and the Congregation Council.

A. PROVIDING FOR INTERIM MINISTRY

So that the well-being of a congregation during a pastoral transition may be maintained, the synod bishop and bishop's staff cooperate with the Congregation Council to provide continuing pastoral ministry. To facilitate this, the bishop, in consultation with the Congregation Council and dean, appoints an interim pastor during the congregation's pastoral vacancy. In accordance with the synod Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions, the interim pastor has the rights and duties of a regularly called pastor. Normally, the appointment of the interim pastor is made prior to the resigning pastor's departure or shortly thereafter. It may be necessary for worship leadership to continue with the assistance of supply pastors and/or authorized lay worship leaders.

1. **TRANSITION TEAM** – In consultation with the conference dean and the congregation council, the bishop may appoint a Transition Team comprised of rostered leaders and other synod leaders. The Transition Team will provide for worship leadership, interim ministry needs, and work with the congregation council to explore the congregation's future ministry options.

The Transition Team will perform an audit of the congregation's administration that will include

- Financial records (fund balances, budgets, expenses and income, etc.)
- Parochial records (membership, baptisms, confirmations, marriages, funerals, transfers, etc.)

- Important documents (Articles of Incorporation, deeds, Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions, etc.)

Following an initial assessment by the Transition Team and the dean of the conference, the Transition Team will recommend a process for the pastoral transition that may include

- a. Assignment of an interim pastor
- b. Congregation participation in a process such as
 - i. Healthy Congregations
 - ii. Congregation Renewal/Redevelopment
 - iii. Partnership with another congregation/ministry

As with an Intentional Interim, a Transition Team may assist the congregation council in a process to develop a statement of the congregation's purpose, mission, and identity. They may work with the congregation to establish long-term and short-term goals for the ministry.

2. **A REGULAR INTERIM PASTOR** may be appointed to serve pastoral needs while the congregation is in the call process seeking a regularly called pastor. Normally, this type of interim ministry involves the part-time services of the pastor, usually 10 hours per week as a minimum, excluding preaching and presiding. If the interim pastor is serving another congregation or entity, the approval of the council or board of that body must be obtained. Because of the limited availability of pastors for interim service, it may be necessary to obtain other pastors to assist the appointed interim to fulfill the responsibilities needed by a congregation. (The form in Appendices 10 and 11 have information regarding regular interim pastor)
3. **AN INTENTIONAL INTERIM PASTOR** may be appointed by the bishop in consultation with the council to serve the congregation in a specific ministry of transition to help the congregation move toward the process of seeking a regularly called pastor. This type of interim ministry may involve the full-time or part-time services of the pastor to lead the congregation through self-examination, attending to conflict, and/or orienting toward the future. Intentional interim pastors generally bring specific training to this ministry.

An interim pastor appointed to serve in a multiple-staff congregation would normally be a pastor from outside the congregation. If the associate/assistant pastor is appointed to be the interim, then that person shall not be eligible for a call as senior pastor.

3. **A CHAPLAIN INTERIM** may be appointed by the bishop in circumstances in which a congregation has such little resource as to be unable to compensate an Interim Pastor. In such cases, the Chaplain Interim acts as a representative of the bishop, who will have official pastoral oversight of the congregation. A Chaplain Interim will perform minimal pastoral services in the congregation, limited to participation in council meetings (Model Constitution for Congregations C12.12.), funerals and emergency pastoral visits: Sunday supply will not be included in the Chaplain Interim's

responsibilities. In addition, the congregation will consult the Chaplain Interim for all other pastoral acts (e.g., baptisms, confirmations, marriage, home communion). Under this arrangement, congregations will be responsible for the regular daily function of the congregation, including Christian education, regular visitation, property maintenance, finances, etc.

Compensation for a Chaplain Interim will be as determined by the bishop and no less than \$25 per hour, plus mileage reimbursement at the IRS Standard Mileage Rate.

Congregations assigned a Chaplain Interim will be required, at least on a quarterly basis, to submit financial and statistical reports to the office of the Bishop. These reports will be in a format approved by the Bishop and include at a minimum the following information:

- Income & expenses for the period compared to budget
- Balances on all funds & accounts under the congregation's name
- Average worship attendance
- Baptisms, funerals, confirmations for the period
- Other information as requested by the Bishop

B. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INTERIM PASTOR AND CONGREGATION.

The duties of an interim pastor are similar to those of a regularly called pastor. Such duties normally include emergency calls to members at home or in the hospital, pastoral guidance for the council and the congregation, catechetical instruction, pastoral acts, etc. Specific duties will be spelled out in a letter of agreement signed by an officer of the congregation, the interim pastor, and the bishop.

Since the availability of the interim pastor for many duties may be limited, it is the duty of the congregation council to inform parishioners of the interim pastor's responsibilities to avoid unrealistic expectations. The council may need to designate persons or committees to oversee certain aspects of the congregation's interim life—such as the newsletter, care of the church property, and other administrative tasks. Consultation with the church secretary and other staff will aid in such designations. In multiple-staff situations, it should not be assumed that remaining staff members take over the duties of the departing staff.

The Parish/Congregation Council should appoint a contact person to provide information to the interim pastor about shut-ins, deaths, meetings, etc. These persons should be active members who regularly attend worship, have telephones and preferably email.

The Parish/Congregation Council should appoint a contact person(s) to serve as the liaison with supply pastors and/or authorized lay worship leaders should they be needed during the interim period.

The Council shall complete an information sheet for the interim pastor (Appendix 10) which includes the name(s) of the contact person(s).

C. COMPENSATION OF THE INTERIM PASTOR.

An interim pastor shall be compensated for the time spent serving the needs of the congregation. If the interim is serving 10-12 hours per week, the compensation shall be $\frac{1}{4}$ of the previous pastor's salary, but not less than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the synod minimum salary. The terms of such compensation shall be detailed in the agreement between the interim pastor and the Congregation Council and approved by the bishop (Appendix 11). A trained *intentional* interim pastor's salary and benefits are based on the appropriate synodical guidelines for a pastor of his/her experience.

D. AUTHORITY OF THE INTERIM PASTOR.

The interim pastor may be a pastor of a neighboring congregation, a pastor under call to special service such as an intentional interim pastor, a pastor on leave from call, or a retired pastor. During service to the congregation, the interim pastor shall have the rights and duties of a regularly called pastor. However, the synodical constitution discourages any involvement of the interim in the call process (S14.17.). It should be understood by all parties that, unless stipulated by the bishop at the start of the interim, the interim pastor shall not be a candidate for pastor of the congregation.

E. MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL (JOINT COUNCIL) WITH THE CONFERENCE DEAN AND THE INTERIM PASTOR.

The conference dean and interim pastor appointed by the bishop meet with the congregation council before the departing pastor's ending date, if possible. The departing pastor should not attend this meeting. Items discussed at this meeting include:

1. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS PASTOR'S CLOSURE WITH THE CONGREGATION.

- a. Have records been reviewed, accounts settled, exit interview conducted? Are there any "loose ends" that need to be tied?

2. PLAN FOR INTERIM MINISTRY.

- a. The duties and responsibilities of the interim pastor are discussed utilizing Appendices 9 & 10 leading to the completion of a letter of agreement between the interim and congregation council a copy of which is shared with the office of the bishop for approval.

F. CLOSURE OF THE INTERIM RELATIONSHIP.

Upon completion of service, the interim pastor, congregation secretary and conference dean shall certify to the bishop that the parochial records for the period for which he/she was responsible are in order. (Use form similar to Appendix 2.)

G. OTHER PASTORS' RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE CONGREGATION.

The interim pastor should normally perform all ministerial acts within the congregation. Members of the congregation shall not call on the former pastor or any other pastor for ministerial acts without the express invitation of the interim pastor. Pastoral ethics require that the departing pastor not to return to the congregation to conduct services, including weddings and funerals, after termination of ministry there, unless there are unusual circumstances and he/she is invited by the interim or newly-called pastor. The former pastor should not return

for pastoral acts for at least a full year after the arrival of the new pastor in order that the transition might be completed. This matter would be appropriate to discuss in the exit interview. This procedure encourages a congregation to begin growing toward the future rather than clinging to the past. (see Appendices 5 & 6 for covenants of closure that should be shared with the congregation)

H. SUPPLY PASTORS/ AUTHORIZED LAY WORSHIP LEADERS.

The bishop's office arranges supply pastors and authorized lay worship leaders. Authorized lay worship leaders must obtain special authorization from the bishop to preside at Holy Communion. Ordained pastors will be sought to preside at Holy Communion before an authorized lay worship leader will be sought. All supply pastors/authorized lay worship leaders should be compensated for their services according to the current synod guidelines.

In order to facilitate the scheduling of supply, the Congregation Worship Info Sheet in Appendix 1 should be completed and sent to the synod office.

EXPECTATIONS DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD

A. MISSION PROCESS

During the transition period congregations are expected to take advantage of opportunities to develop themselves as mission entities. In most cases, congregations will participate in a process of Transformational Transitions, in which the congregational leaders (council members and others) attend workshops and networking events using the tools of ELCA Transformational Ministry and *Healthy Congregations*™.

B. AUDIT

Congregations will be required to perform a complete audit of their finances and submit a report to the office of the bishop prior to beginning the call process. This audit should cover all programs and accounts related to the congregation, including operating accounts, endowments, restricted accounts, cemetery funds (unless separately incorporated).

C. CONSTITUTION

If it hasn't done so in the past three years, the congregation must update its constitution using the most recent Model Constitution for Congregations from the ELCA and submit any amendments to the synod. The Constitution Committee of the synod can assist in this process.

D. CEMETERIES

The bishop's office will require a copy of any governing documents regarding cemeteries related to the congregation, as well as a list of current board/committee members for the cemetery.

THE CALL PROCESS

MEETING BETWEEN THE DEAN, SYNOD STAFF, AND CONGREGATION COUNCIL (JOINT COUNCIL) TO EXPLAIN THE CALL PROCESS, DEVELOPMENT OF A MINISTRY SITE PROFILE, APPOINTMENT OF A CALL COMMITTEE, AND INTERVIEW PROCESS.

A. MEETING TO REVIEW THE CALL PROCESS.

Copies of “Frequently Asked Questions” and “the Call Process at a Glance” are distributed and discussed. The council president(s) is given a copy of the manual that will be shared with the call committee when appointed.

B. DEVELOPMENT OF MINISTRY SITE PROFILE

- a. The congregation council prepares for a period of self-study. This time may be led by an intentional interim pastor, a member of synod staff, or the congregation council. Tools such as Healthy Congregations, Transformational Ministry, or others recommended by the bishop or staff, may be used during this period. The self-study can take as little as three months to eighteen months or more, depending on the circumstances.

The Ministry Site Profile

- b. The Ministry Site Profile (MSP) provides congregations (single and multiple point parishes) and church-related organizations (schools, social ministry organizations, healthcare institutions, and agencies) a single, common form to use to describe their mission and their search for a rostered leader.
- c. The MSP is filled out by leaders within the congregation or organization, under the guidance of the conference dean. Once completed and submitted, the MSP will be stored within the ELCA’s mobility database. “Ministry Opportunities” makes it possible for rostered leaders and others to search the database of MSPs to learn of ministry openings, to read a basic snapshot of information about each opening, and to learn about the appropriate contact person for each call process.
- d. A sample MSP can be downloaded and copies shared with the council and/or others with the responsibility of completing the profile. See “Sample Forms” at <http://www.elca.org/call-process>. The GUIDE TO THE MSP and other related forms can also be found at this site.
- e. The preparation of the MSP should involve as many people as possible in thinking and writing about the questions of Identity/Purpose, Gifts/Resources, and Context/Needs. Begin every conversation with Bible study and prayer.
- f. The most important questions are the narrative questions. Give them a lot of thought, especially the questions on purpose, giftedness and mission.
- g. The congregation council should approve the MSP before filing. Once the MSP is approved, the bishop’s office should be notified. The bishop or a representative (assistant or dean) may seek clarification of responses on the MSP or recommend amendments.

- h. The congregation council will identify an outside person who know the congregation to complete a Reference Recommendation. This person should be willing to give thoughtful and honest responses to the questions asked on the form.

Steps for Posting the Ministry Site Profile

- a. A person(s) with computer experience will need to volunteer or be appointed to enter a final version of the MSP online. They simply will be transferring the completed MSP to the ELCA database.
- b. They will go to the ELCA Call Process website (www.elca.org/call) and then click on “Ministry Sites”.
- c. They will be required to create an account and to give other identifying information in order to access the Ministry Site Profile. They will click where indicated to access the Ministry Site Profile and supporting forms.
- d. The MSP is a web-based form. They should save their work as they proceed so that it is not lost, and they can stop in the middle of their work and resume. We recommend typing the responses to narrative questions into Word or another text editing program, then cut and paste into the MSP online form.
- e. When the MSP is completed, they may download and save a PDF version to their computer. They can also print a copy for their records.
- f. They will receive an email confirming that the MSP has been received.
- g. Once the MSP has been completed they should click on “Request a Reference Recommendation” and enter the name and contact information for the person identified by the council, who will receive an email with a link to complete the form.
- h. The MSP does not become active in the system until the Reference Recommendation has been completed and the Synodical Bishop approves the MSP and allows it to be posted.
- i. They can go to “Access Account” on the website in order to monitor the status of their MSP and access the supporting forms (the Reflections and Reference forms).
- j. If they wish to update their information, they go to “Access Account” to edit the existing MSP and re-submit it.

C. PLAN FOR THE SELECTION OF A CALL COMMITTEE.

Once the MSP has been approved a call committee is appointed in consultation with the conference dean. Nominations are made in a manner consistent with the congregation’s constitution. The number of persons appointed depends upon the constitution. Normally this is 6 persons, no more than two of whom are members of the congregation council.

1. Definition

The call committee, seeking God’s will for the congregation through prayer, interviews, consulting of references, and conversation with one another, unanimously and wholeheartedly recommends a candidate to the congregation council for their consideration.

2. Accountability

The call committee is responsible to the council and to the council alone.

3. Composition

Normally, the call committee consists of six persons, no more than two of whom are members of the council, as specified by the congregation's constitution. Non-council members should be responsible voting members of the congregation. The call committee's membership should reflect the composition of the congregation, seek gender balance and include persons of various ages and length of congregational membership. To the extent possible, they should not be members of the same family.

4. Officers of the Call Committee

Officers consist of the Call Committee Chairperson, Secretary and Chaplain. These officers should not be appointed by the council, but will be chosen by the call committee itself when they meet for their initial training.

D. INTERVIEW PROCESS

- a. The Call Committee and Congregation Council will hold a meeting facilitated by the conference dean to review the MSP. This will give the Council an opportunity to share its expectations of the Call Committee and respond to any questions about the MSP that the committee may have. At this meeting, the dean will go over the Manual for Call Committees.
 - i. It is important for the Council and Call Committee to understand the need for strict confidentiality in the call process. Call Committees may share information about their process but should not share identifying information about candidates until they have chosen a candidate to present to the Council.
- b. When the Call Committee has identified a candidate they would like to bring to the Council they will share the candidate's Rostered Leader Profile. This information is for Council and Call Committee members only and should remain confidential.
 - i. The Council will arrange to meet with the candidate and Call Committee. It is recommended that the Call Committee meet with the Council at least 30 minutes before the candidate is to join them.
 - ii. The Council (or Call Committee) should have a draft "Definition of Compensation, Benefits, and Responsibilities for a Pastor" prepared ahead of the meeting. This will form the basis of negotiations with the candidate should s/he be approved by the Council.

A sample of the form is in Appendix 12. Section E of this form can come directly from the Mutual Expectations described in the MSP but should be further negotiated with the candidate.

- iii. Following the meeting, the Council will meet to discuss the candidate and vote whether to propose him/her to the congregation. A 2/3 vote is required to move the candidate forward.
- iv. A final Letter of Call is prepared once the candidate has been approved by Council. This information must be agreed to by the candidate and the bishop prior to the congregation meeting at which the vote will take place. *If the compensation package exceeds the adopted budget of the congregation it should be included in the resolution to call the pastor.*
- c. The Call Committee should be formally acknowledged for its work, especially at the congregation meeting at which the vote is taken. Prayers for the Committee should be included in the weekly worship of the congregation.
- d. The Call Committee may be asked to serve as a transition team for up to six months of the pastor's term until a Mutual Ministry Committee is formed.

E. MINISTRY EVALUATION

- a. Six to nine months from the start of the new pastor's ministry with the congregation, a ministry evaluation is recommended. The conference dean or another representative of the bishop's office will facilitate a review by the pastor and congregation council of the goals and mutual expectations from the Ministry Site Profile. The Transition Team or Mutual Ministry Committee may be included in this meeting. This review is intended to help the pastor and council assess their progress and determine whether any adjustments are needed to goals and expectations. The bishop's representative will write a report of the evaluation and provide copies to the bishop, the pastor, and the congregation council.

APPENDIX 1 – CONGREGATION WORSHIP INFORMATION SHEET

Congregation: _____

Physical Location: _____

Worship Time(s): _____

Children's Sermon: Yes ____ No ____ Communion schedule: _____

Liturgy Setting: ELW / LBW / WOV _____

Contact Person: _____

Any additional information you think will be helpful

Submit form to:

Brenda Krouse
Upper Susquehanna Synod
PO Box 36
Lewisburg PA 17837
brenda@uss-elca.org

APPENDIX 2 - LETTER CERTIFYING THAT CHURCH RECORDS ARE IN ORDER

Upon the resignation of a pastor, the following policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America applies: “The parochial records of each congregation shall be kept in a separate book which shall remain its property. The secretary of the congregation shall attest to the bishop of the synod that such records have been placed in the secretary’s hands in good order by a departing pastor before:

1. the pastor is installed in another field of labor, or
2. a certificate of dismissal or transfer is issued.”

*The following or similar language should be printed **on congregation letterhead** and signed by the departing pastor, congregation (council) secretary, and dean, and sent to the office of the bishop.*

Date: _____

Dear Bishop _____,

This is to certify that I have examined the parochial records of _____ Church in _____ location and find them in good order.

In addition, the congregation has no debt to Pastor _____ and Pastor _____ has no outstanding debt to the congregation.

Secretary

Pastor

Conference Dean

Date of constitution _____	attach copy
Membership	
Baptised _____	
Confirmed _____	
Voting _____	
Date of last congregation meeting _____	attach report
Date of last financial audit _____	attach report
Does the congregation have a cemetery? _____	attach governing documents and list of board/committee members

Mailing address for call process:
Upper Susquehanna Synod, ELCA
P.O. Box 36
Lewisburg, PA 17837

email: brenda@uss-elca.org

APPENDIX 3 - EXIT INTERVIEW FOR PASTOR

Date:

*Congregation's Name:

*Address:

*City/State:

*¹Zip:

Pastor's Name:

1. How would you describe the congregation when you arrived?
2. How would you describe the congregation as you leave?
3. What do you believe has gone particularly well during your leadership?
4. What did not go as well as you had hoped?
5. What are the major strengths of this congregation?
6. What are the major challenges of this congregation?
7. What ministry goals would you suggest for the congregation to strive toward during the next 5 years?
8. What other comments would you like to share?
9. What information from this exit interview should be shared, and with whom?

¹ * include only if not on congregation letterhead.

APPENDIX 4 - EXIT INTERVIEW FOR CONGREGATION

Date:

*Congregation's Name:

*Address:

*City/State:

*²Zip:

Pastor's Name:

1. What has gone particularly well during the pastor's leadership?
2. What did not go as well as you had hoped?
3. What are the major strengths of this congregation?
4. What are the major challenges of this congregation?
5. Were there any surprises when the pastor first arrived?
6. What goals does the congregation need to work toward in the next 5 years?
7. Any thoughts you would like to share with the pastor about his/her leadership style?
8. Where can you find important congregation documents (e.g., Constitution, Certificate of Incorporation, Deed(s), Membership records, Minutes, etc.)?

² * include only if not on letterhead

APPENDIX 5 - A COVENANT OF CLOSURE

Guidelines for the Relationship of a Congregation and Former Pastors

We believe that the Holy Spirit is acting when a pastor is called to serve God's people and also that the Holy Spirit is acting when it is time for that pastor to accept another call, including the call into retirement.

A healthy relationship between a pastor and God's people is often mutually enriching and joyous. While serving a congregation, a pastor is deeply involved in the lives of God's people, and it is appropriate that strong bonds of trust, friendship, commitment and interdependence develop.

However, when the Holy Spirit leads the pastor to a new call or into retirement, those relationships, however strong, must change for the future health of both the congregation and the pastor. For the congregation to move forward, its members need to accept fully the authority and guidance of succeeding pastors, both interim and called, even as they cherish the memory and leadership of the former pastor. For former pastors to live into their new lives of service or retirement, and for the good of the congregation they once served, they need to surrender pastoral authority and sever pastoral ties with their former congregations and their people.

The following expectations will help clarify the new relationship between former pastors and congregations:

Congregations and Members:

- Will not reach out to former pastors for professional pastoral care in times of emotional, spiritual, or physical need, but rather exclusively to their current pastor.
- Will not invite or approach former pastors to perform or participate in pastoral acts, such as weddings, funerals, baptisms, home communions, etc., but rather exclusively the current pastor.
- Will not seek the counsel of former pastors (or their family members) on matters relating to the congregation, including its worship life, finance, administration, leadership, or issues. Members should avoid talking with former pastors (and family members) about congregational matters.
- Will not expect former pastors (or their family members) to retain membership in the church, to attend worship, or to participate in activities or events in the life of the congregation.
- Will speak positively of former pastors (and their family members). As Martin Luther explains in the *Small Catechism*, the Eighth Commandment compels us to do so: "We are to fear and love God, so that we do not tell lies about our neighbors, betray or slander them, or destroy their reputations. Instead, we are to come to their defense, speak well of them and interpret everything they do in the best possible light."
- Will, in continuing personal relationships, regard former pastors as friends only. Although it is proper to address any ordained minister as "pastor," in light of the new relationship members will remember that the former leader is no longer serving as *their* pastor.

Former Pastors:

-Will politely but firmly refuse requests to provide ministerial care to former congregational members, instead referring them to the current pastor. For the health of the congregation and the integrity of the ministry of the current pastor, this rule will be without exception.

-Will politely but firmly refuse all requests to perform or participate in pastoral acts, such as weddings, funerals, baptisms, home communions, etc., instead referring them to the current pastor. (Former pastors will respond to all such requests with an unequivocal "no" and not suggest that members ask the current pastor if it is okay. Such a request puts the current pastor in a very difficult position, creates an unhealthy relationship, and can set a dangerous precedent.)

-Will decline to comment on matters relating to the former congregation, including worship life, finance, administration, interpersonal relationships, conflicts, or politics. Former pastors will counsel their family members similarly to decline. It is wise for former pastors to discourage members even from talking with them about congregational affairs.

-Will move the official membership for themselves and immediate family members to another congregation. Former pastors and family members will refrain from attending worship or participating in regular events and activities in the life of the congregation. Adult children of the pastor are strongly encouraged to move their membership as well.

-Will speak well of the former congregation, its leaders, and its members. As Martin Luther explains in the *Small Catechism*, the Eighth Commandment instructs us to do so: "We are to fear and love God, so that we do not tell lies about our neighbors, betray, or slander them, or destroy their reputations. Instead, we are to come to their defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light."

-Will, in continuing personal relationships, regard members of the former congregation as friends only. In light of this new relationship, former pastors may encourage former congregation members to address them by their given name. When they are addressed with the honorific of "Pastor," ministers may remind, as appropriate, former members that they no longer serve as *their* pastor.

Covenant of Closure

In order to promote a healthy closure to the ministry tenure of our departing pastor and a healthy beginning to the tenure of successor pastors, we the undersigned agree to do our best to abide by the conditions of this covenant. We will encourage others in our congregation and our families to do the same by making this covenant a public and living document.

Signatures

Congregation Council President

Vice President

Date: _____

Pastor

APPENDIX 6 - A COVENANT OF CLOSURE:

Guidelines for the Relationship of a Congregation and Their Former Ministers of Word and Service

We believe that the Holy Spirit is acting when a minister of Word and Service is called to serve God's people and also that the Holy Spirit is acting when it is time for that minister to accept another call; including the call into retirement.

A healthy relationship between a deacon and God's people is often mutually enriching and joyous. While serving a congregation, a deacon is deeply involved in the lives of God's people, and it is appropriate that strong bonds of trust, friendship, commitment, and interdependence develop.

But when the Holy Spirit leads the deacon to a new call or into retirement, those relationships, however strong, must change for the future health of both the congregation and the minister. For the congregation to move forward, its members need to accept fully the authority and guidance of succeeding ministers, both interim and called, even as they cherish the memory and leadership of their former minister. For deacons to live into their new lives of service or retirement, they need to surrender ministerial authority and sever ministerial ties with the congregations and people they formerly served.

The following expectations will help clarify the new relationship between deacons and they congregations and people they formerly served:

Congregations and Members:

- Will not reach out to former ministers of Word and Service for professional care in times of emotional, spiritual, or physical need, but rather exclusively to their current ministers.
- Will not invite or approach former ministers of Word and Service to participate in pastoral acts, such as weddings, funerals, baptisms, home communions, etc., but rather exclusively the current ministers.
- Will not seek the counsel of former ministers of Word and Service (or their family members) on matters relating to the congregation, including its worship life, finance, administration, leadership, or issues. Members will avoid even talking with former ministers of Word and Service (and family members) about congregational matters.
- Will not expect former ministers of Word and Service (or their family members) to retain membership in the church, to attend worship, or to participate in activities in the life of the congregation.
- Will speak positively of former ministers of Word and Service (and their family members). As Martin Luther explains in the *Small Catechism*, the Eighth Commandment compels us to do so: "We are to fear and love God, so that we do not tell lies about our neighbors, betray, or slander them, or destroy their reputations. Instead, we are to come to their defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light."
- Will, in continuing personal relationships, regard former ministers of Word and Service exclusively as friends. Although it is proper to address any minister of Word and Service with the title "Deacon", in light of the new relationship members are wise to remember that the former ministers of Word and Service no longer serve them or their community.

Former Ministers of Word and Service:

- Will politely but firmly refuse requests to provide ministerial care to former congregational members, instead referring them to the current ministers. For the health of the congregation and the integrity of the ministry of the current ministers, this rule will be without exception.
- Will politely but firmly refuse all requests to perform or participate in pastoral acts, such as weddings, funerals, baptisms, etc., instead referring them to the current minister. (Former ministers of Word and Service will respond to all such requests with an unequivocal "no" and not suggest that members ask the current leader if it is okay. Such a request puts the current leader in a very difficult position, creates an unhealthy triangle, and can set a bad precedent.)
- Will decline to comment on matters relating to the congregation they used to serve, including worship life, finance, administration, interpersonal relationships, conflicts or politics. They will counsel their family members similarly to decline. It is wise for ministers of Word and Service to discourage members from congregations they used to serve even from talking with them about church affairs.
- Will move the official membership of themselves and all family members to another congregation. Ministers of Word and Service (and family members) will refrain from attending worship or participating in regular events and activities in the life of the congregation they used to serve.
- Will speak well of the former congregation, its leaders, and its members. As Martin Luther explains in the *Small Catechism*, the Eighth Commandment instructs us to do so: "We are to fear and love God, so that we do not tell lies about our neighbors, betray, or slander them, or destroy their reputations. Instead, we are to come to their defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light."
- Will, in continuing personal relationships, regard people they used to serve as friends and only friends. In light of this new relationship, ministers of Word and Service may encourage former congregation members to address them by their given name. When addressed by an honorific title, ministers may remind former members, as appropriate, that they no longer serve their community.

Covenant of Closure

In order to promote a healthy closure to the ministry tenure of our departing minister of Word and Service and a healthy beginning to the tenure of successor ministers, we the undersigned agree to do our best to abide by the conditions of this covenant. We will encourage others in our congregation and our families to do the same by making this covenant a public and living document.

Signatures

Congregation Council President

Vice President

Minister of Word and Service

Date: _____

APPENDIX 7 - SERVICES OF FAREWELL AND GODSPEED

Reprinted from *Occasional Services*, copyright 1982, by permission.
See next page for ELW order

1. Farewell and Godspeed is a public affirmation of the corporate nature of the baptismal faith, for use when members leave a congregation.
2. When set within the liturgy for Holy Communion, this order is used following either the Prayers (22) or the post-communion prayer (40).

(Sit)

3. A representative of the congregation comes forward with those who are leaving the congregation and addresses the assembly:

(NAMES) are leaving our congregation, and we wish to bid *them* farewell.

4. The pastor or a representative of the congregation may make brief comments about those who are leaving, recalling the important events which have been shared with the congregation.

5. The minister says:

Pastor: In Holy Baptism our Lord Jesus Christ received you and made you *members* of his Church. When you *came to/were baptized in* this congregation we rejoiced to receive you into our fellowship in the Gospel. In this community of faith you have heard the proclamation of God's Word, which reveals his loving purpose for you and for all creation. You have been nourished at Christ's holy table and called to be *witnesses* to the Gospel. God has blessed you in this fellowship, and he has blessed us through you.

All: We encourage you to continue to receive and share God's gifts in (name of new congregation) as *workers* with us in the kingdom of God.

6. The prayer is said.

All: Let us pray.

Eternal God, we thank you for (names) and for our life together in this congregation and community. As *they have* been a blessing to us, so now send *them* forth to be a blessing to others; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

(Stand)

7. The service continues with the Peace (23) or the Benediction (42).

INTRODUCTION

Farewell and Godspeed is an affirmation of the corporate nature of the baptismal faith, for use when people leave a congregation. It may be adapted for use when people leave a field of service in another organization or institution.

When set within Holy Communion or the Service of the Word, this order is used following the prayers of intercession or before the blessing.

A representative of the congregation comes forward with those who are leaving the congregation and addresses the assembly.

Name/s, as you leave our congregation, we wish to bid you farewell.

One of the following or another appropriate scripture passage may be read.

A reading from Exodus: The LORD said, "I am going to send an angel in front of you, to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared." (Exodus 23:20)

or

A reading from Isaiah: Thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. (Isaiah 43:1-3)

or

A reading from John:

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Brief comments about those who are leaving and their life in the congregation may follow.

The presiding minister continues with these words, or with similar words appropriate to the person/s and the circumstances.

[In holy baptism our Lord Jesus Christ received you and made you members of his church.] When you came to this congregation we rejoiced to welcome you into the mission we share as the people of God. In this community you have come to know and to share in God's loving purpose for you and for all creation. God has blessed you in this community, and God has blessed us through you.

The presiding minister may continue, as appropriate.

We encourage you to continue to receive and share God's gifts in name of new congregation or location, united with us in the body of Christ and the mission we share.

One of the following or another appropriate prayer is said.

Let us pray.

Eternal God, we thank you for *name/s*
and for the time we have shared with *them*.

As *they have* been a blessing to us,
so now send *them* forth to be a blessing to others;
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

or

Let us pray.

Gracious God,
we thank you for the work and witness of your *servant/s name/s*,
who *have* enriched this *congregation*
and shared *their* gifts with *their colleagues/friends/family*.
Now bless and preserve *them* at this time of transition.
Day by day, guide *them* and give *them* what is needed,
friends to cheer *their* way,
and a clear vision of that to which you are now calling *them*.
By your Holy Spirit be present in *their* pilgrimage,
that *they* may travel with the one who is the way, the truth, and the life,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The service continues with the greeting of peace or with the blessing.

NOTES ON THE SERVICE

The first sentence in the address to those departing may be omitted if one or more persons among those departing are not baptized.

Departure from a community may occur in difficult circumstances, such as in connection with broken relationships. Pastoral assessment of the situation may suggest the use of other prayers or rites, such as individual or corporate confession and forgiveness, instead of or in addition to Farewell and Godspeed.

From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2014 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.

Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #27217.

8. *When appropriate, the following or a similar statement may be made by a representative of the congregation:*
Pastor (name) , on (date of call) , we called you to be our pastor; to proclaim god's Word, to baptize new members into the Church of Jesus Christ, to announce God's forgiveness to us, and to preside at our celebrations of the Lord's Supper. With the gospel you have comforted us in times of sickness and trouble, and at the death of our loved ones. Sharing our joys and sorrows, you (and your family) have been important to our life together in the Church of Jesus Christ and in our service to this community.

APPENDIX 8 – LITURGY OF THANKSGIVING AT THE CONCLUSION OF AN INTERIM

This brief liturgy may be led by the congregation president or another designated leader. Prayers may be adapted to include the pastor's family. If a new pastor has been called to serve the congregation the prayer may include thanksgiving for that call.

The liturgy may take place before the benediction on the final Sunday of the interim pastor's term or at another suitable time.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Gathered as the body of Christ, and anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, we are joined in God's mission for the sake of the world. We are called to that mission in our daily lives and in the ministries we share as the church of God. Today we recognize the change we have made in the office of Pastor. It is our privilege to give thanks for Pastor _____'s ministry as Interim Pastor within this congregation.

The following words are addressed to the interim pastor

Pastor _____, you accepted the task of serving as our Interim Pastor with faithfulness and compassion. You have proclaimed God's word, baptized, taught, announced God's forgiveness, and presided at the Lord's table. With the Gospel you have comforted us in times of sickness, trouble, and at the death of our loved ones. Sharing in our joys and sorrows and walking with us through this transition, you [and your family] have been important to our life together here at _____ Lutheran Church. Today we give thanks for your service as Pastor in our midst, and we pray for God's blessing as we say farewell now.

Let us pray.

Gracious God, we give you thanks for the ministry of Pastor _____ among the people of God in this place. We thank you for the ways s/he has enriched this congregation and shared her/his gifts, and for walking with us during this transition. [We give you thanks also for Pastor _____ who has accepted the call to serve among us now.] Encourage us to live with hope and gladness in the future you give to us. Bless and preserve us all in our communion as children of God, guard and guide us in our shared ministries, grant us joy in service, and peace in your presence. **Amen**

APPENDIX 9 - THANKSGIVING AT THE CONCLUSION OF A CALL³

(Reprinted from *Occasional Services for the Assembly*,
a resource of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*)

This order is appropriately set within the service of Holy Communion on the final Sunday of a minister's service under call in a congregation. The order follows the prayer after communion.

This order may be led by a pastor of the congregation (unless the pastor's call is the one concluding), another rostered leader, a representative of the congregation, or a representative of the synod.

Address

The person whose call is concluding and representative/s of the congregation come before the assembly.

A pastor

A representative of the congregation addresses the pastor whose call is concluding with these or similar words.
Name, on date of call, we of name of congregation called you to be pastor in this place: to proclaim God's word, to baptize and teach, to announce God's forgiveness, and to preside at the Lord's table. With the gospel you have comforted us in times of sickness and trouble, and at the death of our loved ones. Sharing our joys and sorrows, you [and your family] have been important to our life together in the church of Jesus Christ, in our service to this community, and in God's mission to the whole world. [As you leave this community of faith, we say farewell, and we pray for God's blessing.]

A deaconess, diaconal minister, or associate in ministry

A representative of the congregation addresses the person whose call is concluding with these or similar words.
Name, on date of call, we of name of congregation called you to serve among us as a *deaconess / diaconal minister / associate in ministry*. Here a description of the particular ministry may be included. Sharing our joys and sorrows, you [and your family] have been important to our life together in the church of Jesus Christ, in our service to this community, and in God's mission to the whole world. [As you leave this community of faith, we say farewell, and we pray for God's blessing.]

The leader addresses the assembly with these or similar words.

People of God, members of name of congregation,
do you release name from service
as your *pastor / deaconess / diaconal minister / associate in ministry*?

We do, and we give thanks to God for our ministry together.

The leader addresses the person whose call is concluding.

Name, do you recognize and accept
the completion of your ministry with name of congregation?

Response: I do, and I give thanks to God for our ministry together.

Thanksgiving and Sending

The presiding minister leads the assembly in prayer.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, through your Son Jesus Christ
you gave the holy apostles many gifts and commanded them to feed your flock.
You equip your people with abilities that differ according to the grace given to them,
and you call them to various avenues of service.

We give you thanks for the ministry of name among the people of God in this place.

You watch over our going out and our coming in:

bless this time of ending and beginning.

You surround your people in every time and place:

keep us close in your love.

You accompany your people in times of joy and times of trial:

prosper all that has been done to your glory in this time together;

³ *Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Occasional Services for the Assembly*, copyright © 2009 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, p. 111.

heal and forgive all that has fallen short of your will for us.
Help name [and *her/his* family] and all of us
to live with courage and gladness in the future you give to us.
As *they have* been a blessing to us,
so now send *them/us* forth to be a blessing to others;
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

Blessing

The presiding minister, or the pastor whose call has concluded, proclaims God's blessing in these or similar words.

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.
Amen.

A sending song may be sung.

Dismissal

The assisting minister may send the assembly into mission.

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

NOTES ON THE SERVICE

This order may be adapted for use in settings other than ministry in a congregation.

At the conclusion of a call to a rostered leader other than an ordained pastor, Farewell and Godspeed may be used instead of this order. Farewell and Godspeed may also be used at the conclusion of a lay professional worker's time of service.

The bracketed words at the end of the initial address may be omitted when the person is continuing in the membership of the congregation. The address may be adapted as appropriate when this order is used on the occasion of the retirement of a rostered leader.

When a representative of the synod leads this order, the representative may address the person whose call is concluding and the assembly with these or similar words. This address may precede the blessing.

Your sisters and brothers in the name of synod
and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
give thanks to God for the ministry you have shared.
We promise you our continued support and prayer.
Rejoicing in the blessings of God in this congregation
and in the ministry of name,
with hope in God's abundant grace in years to come,
I announce that *name's* service as position in this congregation
is now concluded.

APPENDIX 10 - COUNCIL WORKSHEET FOR REGULAR INTERIM PASTOR

The Congregation Council may use this worksheet to determine items that should be included in the agreement with the interim pastor (Appendix 10).

An agreement with an intentional interim pastor may include additional items such as the leadership by the interim pastor in developmental tasks of the congregation.

Please bear in mind that the interim ministry is not necessarily full-time and some expectations for ministry will have to be met from within the lay membership of the congregation.

1. What do you understand to be the needs of your congregation at this time?
2. How do you see the interim pastor or other leaders helping meet these needs?
3. We would like the interim pastor to preach:
How many Sunday services a month?
How many special services?
How many weekday services?
4. We would like the interim pastor to teach:
Catechetics/Confirmation *Time/Place*
Bible Study *Time/Place*
First Communion *Time/Place*
Sunday Church School *Time/Place*
Other _____ *Time/Place*
5. How would you like the interim to be involved with council meetings?
When and where does the council meet?
6. What other meetings do you expect the interim to attend?
Committee(s) When and where?
Staff When and where?
Other
7. Do you anticipate any upcoming baptisms? Weddings? Funerals?
8. Do you expect the interim pastor to do counseling?
Baptismal _____ Crisis _____ Pre-Marital _____ Other _____
9. Do you expect the interim pastor to administer home communions?
How often?
When?
In whose homes?

Appendix 10: Continued from previous page

10. What visitation responsibilities do you anticipate the interim doing?

Home visits_____

Hospital visits_____

Nursing Home Visits_____

Other (Describe)

11. For what other duties would you expect the interim to be responsible?

12. Who are some people in the congregation who can visit with the interim in situations #9 and #10 above?

13. Do you expect an interim pastor to attend to these responsibilities in:

a full-time position?

¾ time?

½ time?

¼ time?

(Interim pastors who are needed less than one day a week are sometimes paid on an hourly basis - \$20/hour. Interim pastors will be compensated for travel, including to attend meetings and worship services at the church.)

14. Who and how should the interim pastor contact leaders in the congregation?

Council President

Council Vice President

Congregational Treasurer

Regarding visitations

If the pastor becomes ill?

15. What should be the starting date be for the interim pastor?

APPENDIX 11 - AGREEMENT FOR REGULAR INTERIM PASTOR

(The letter of agreement should be on congregation/parish letterhead and is complete only with signatures of the congregation president, the interim pastor, and the bishop of the synod.)

Date:

*Congregation:

*Address:

*⁴City / State Zip

The Reverend (*name*) agrees to serve as interim pastor of (*name*) Lutheran Church, (*location*), beginning (*date*). He/she will continue in this position, until a new pastor has been called, or until the bishop, in conversation with the Congregation Council of (*name*) Lutheran Church and Pastor (*name*) determines that his/her services are no longer required. Thirty days' notice will be provided by the pastor or the congregation, in consultation with the bishop, before ending this agreement.

The Interim Pastor will perform all official pastoral acts and ministry as agreed upon. For this he/she will be compensated \$(*amount*) per [year/month/week], and will be reimbursed for transportation costs at the IRS standard mileage rate.

Should the Interim Pastor be unable to perform a pastoral act, he/she will, in consultation with the council president, secure another pastor to fill in.

The Interim Pastor shall not be a candidate for the pastorate of this congregation. Also, the Interim Pastor shall refrain from exerting any influence on the call process of this congregation, except as requested by the bishop.

The Council President (or other member designated by council) will keep the Interim Pastor informed of the pastoral needs of the congregation.

The terms of this agreement will be reviewed and adjusted annually in consultation with the office of the bishop, the pastor and the congregation council unless otherwise agreed by all parties.

INTERIM PASTOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to pastoral acts, the Interim Pastor will be expected to: *(list will vary according to needs of the congregation(s))*

1. Be diligent in prayer and reflection.
2. Lead regularly-scheduled worship services and/or special services. (If the interim is not available for Sunday morning worship, supply pastors may be arranged through a pastor supply list.) Honoraria for such worship leadership shall follow current synodical guidelines.
3. Meet regularly with the Congregation Council.
4. Visit the ill in the hospital and at home.
5. Oversee administration of communion to shut-ins and visit on a [monthly/quarterly/annual] basis:
(attach a list of current shut-ins and their addresses)
6. Teach *(be specific)*.
7. Attend the following committee meetings: *(list)*

At the conclusion of the interim ministry, the Interim Pastor will certify to the bishop that the parochial records are in good order *(Guide for Congregation Councils When a Pastor Resigns, Appendix 1)*.

Regular interim compensation guidelines for 2021


<i>Without Sundays</i>	<i>Sundays included</i>
10 hours/week \$1,500/month (\$18,000/year)	\$2,000/month (\$24,000/year)
20 hours/week \$3,000/month (\$36,000/year)	\$3,500/month (\$42,000/year)

⁴ * do not include if on letterhead

APPENDIX 12: LETTER OF CALL

DEFINITION OF COMPENSATION, BENEFITS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PASTOR OTHER RESOURCES

The bishop's office will prepare copies of the Letter of Call for signature by the congregation president and vice president following the vote to call the pastor.


LETTER OF CALL
TO AN ORDAINED MINISTER OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER,
AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

With prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit to do God's will,

a congregation of the

of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
meeting on

extends to you this call to serve as

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

In accepting this call, you hereby promise to fulfill this pastoral ministry in accord with the standards and policies for ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Therefore, be diligent in the study of Holy Scripture, in use of the means of grace, in prayer, in faithful service, and in holy living.

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

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

President

Secretary

Attested by _____

Bishop of the _____

Date of bishop's signing _____

Additional important resources:

Portico Benefits Services EmployerLink has helpful calculators for determining pension and health care costs (<https://employerlink.porticobenefits.org/home>, look under the "Resources" tab. Compensation guidelines for the Upper Susquehanna Synod can be found on the website (<http://www.uss-elca.org/administration/> in the Finances heading.

Definition of Compensation, Benefits, And Responsibilities of the Pastor

(A FILLABLE PDF VERSION OF THIS FORM IS AVAILABLE ON [THE ELCA WEBSITE](http://www.uss-elca.org))

Prepared by _____
for the Reverend _____
for the period: _____ to _____

A. COMPENSATION

The congregation will provide the following annual compensation:

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

B. PENSION AND OTHER BENEFITS

The congregation will sponsor the pastor in the Pension and Other Benefits Program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which provides retirement, disability, survivor, and medical-dental coverage.

(Sponsorship will include medical-dental coverage for the individual's spouse and children unless they have other employer-provided group medical insurance coverage and the individual consents to waiving medical-dental coverage for them under the ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Program.)

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

C. EXPENSES

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

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

D. AGREEMENT

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

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

A description of the particular responsibilities of this position may be attached to this "Definition of Compensation, Benefits, and Responsibilities."

<or the following may be completed>

E. OTHER PROVISIONS

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

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

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____
- (d) _____
- (e) _____

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

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____
- (d) _____
- (e) _____

F. OTHER MATTERS

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

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

Congregation President

Council Secretary

Date:

(Revised July 2014)