

# **Call Process Manual**

## **Overview and Guiding principles**



## **Saskatchewan Synod**

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

*Approved by Synod council – January 2016*

*Strengthening Faith Communities for Service*

## ELCIC CALL PROCESS

When congregations and church-related organizations in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) set out in search of a rostered minister, the ELCIC provides direction and guidance in the form of a structured call process. The ELCIC directs each synod to develop a process appropriate to its context.

Each of the 5 synods of the ELCIC is responsible for the management of the call process within the area of their respective synod.

## SASKATCHEWAN SYNOD CALL PROCESS

Saskatchewan Synod convention put the following call process bylaw in place:

*Saskatchewan Synod Bylaws, Part III, Section 2. The synod shall have a call process manual approved by synod council. A congregation wishing to extend a call shall follow the general procedures set out in the call process manual unless otherwise advised by the bishop due to unusual circumstances.*

Saskatchewan Synod council developed the Saskatchewan Synod call process, basing the work on national and synodical constitutional articles and administrative bylaws, and interpreting these basic policies for the congregations and organizations of the Saskatchewan Synod.

Saskatchewan Synod congregations and synodical ministries are governed by this call process.

The call process generally assumes a congregation calling a solo rostered leader. Congregations calling a rostered leader to a team ministry; church related organizations calling a rostered leader into chaplaincy and a variety of other unique situations may require discussing an adaptation to the call process with the bishop (as noted in the bylaw above).

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE CALL PROCESS

Throughout the call process, please keep in mind the guiding principles that undergird our work as church.

**Prayer:** Before every meeting and in our walking and talking between meetings we pray. We are human beings who can get in the way of each other, who can get in the way of ourselves. We humbly pray for God's guidance as we engage the call process.

**Conversation:** *"There is a God, but I'm not God. So I don't know everything. But you're not God either. So let's talk."* The call process respects that none of us knows everything, so we need each other. God speaks to us through others: through our partners on the committee, through the participants in our congregation, through the bishop's office, through the candidates that we may interview. In the midst of the conversation we discover more about God, about ourselves, and more about the way forward for our church. This means that the call process is less about "an application" by candidates for a position than an intentional conversation to discern where God is calling the candidate and the congregation.

**Faith:** Whether we are in the midst of growth or in a struggle for our lives, we have faith that God has brought us to this day of blessing or to this time of trial, and will see us through to God's own future—though we often may not see it from here.

**Respect:** We stand in a community built by the decisions of our grandmothers and grandfathers. We respect those constitutional decisions by our elders as we follow the principles of our constitutions, binding ourselves to the policies of the constitution and giving respect to the leaders our constitution upholds: the leadership of the local pastor, the congregational council, and the synodical bishop.

**Mission:** In calling a rostered leader we ask ourselves not, “how will this help us keep the doors open,” but, “how will our decisions be part of carrying out the mission of Jesus in the world?”

### THREE PHASES OF THE SASKATCHEWAN SYNOD CALL PROCESS

There are three basic phases to the Call process: the first is the responsibility of congregational council, the second is the responsibility of the call committee, and the third is the responsibility of the congregational council and the congregation. These three phases are covered in detail in the three parts of the Call process manual:

#### [Part A - Congregational council prepares for the call process](#)

When the rostered leader resigns, or whenever the congregation sets out to seek a rostered leader the Congregational council initiates the call process in consultation with the bishop.

*Model Congregational Constitution: Article IX: Section 5. The Congregational Council shall be the trustees of the congregation and shall have general oversight of the life and activities of the congregation ensuring that everything is done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the ELCIC.*

#### [Part B - Call committee selects a primary candidate](#)

The congregational call committee, in consultation with the bishop, engages in the search for a primary candidate to present to the congregation.

*Synod constitution Article VII, Section 2. . . .throughout the call process the Congregational Council, or a committee authorized by the congregation(s), shall seek the advice and counsel of the bishop of the synod.*

#### [Part C - Congregation calls a rostered leader](#)

The congregation, in consultation with the bishop’s office, calls a rostered leader.

*Synod constitution Article VII, Section 2. Authority to call a pastor shall rest in the congregation.*

CALL PROCESS AT A GLANCE

