

Call Process Manual

Part B: Call committee selects a primary candidate



Saskatchewan Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

Approved by Synod council – January 2016

Strengthening Faith Communities for Service

CALL PROCESS MANUAL PART B

Call committee role..... 3

Call committee organizes..... 3

Call committee reviews (or completes and reviews) the congregational profile..... 3

Call committee prepares a preliminary list of candidates 3

Call committee meets with the bishop..... 4

Call committee prepares a short list of candidates 4

Call committee interviews the short list of candidates 4

Call committee selects a primary candidate..... 5

Appendix B1 – Nomination form 6

Appendix B2 – Agenda for call committee meeting with bishop 7

Appendix B3 – Guide for interviews 8

Appendix B4 – Interview feedback form 10

Appendix B5 – Sample letters for responding to candidates after interviews 11

Congregational council: Throughout the manual the term “congregational council” is used. In some contexts the role of “congregational council” may be delegated by constitutions or parish agreements to a parish council.

Bishop: When the term “bishop” is used, in some cases the role may be delegated by the bishop to a bishop’s representative.

CALL COMMITTEE ROLE

When a congregation is searching for a new rostered leader the call committee, appointed by the congregational council, is asked to prayerfully study the leadership needs of the congregation and, in consultation with the bishop conducts the search process and selects the primary candidate to present to the congregation for call.

CALL COMMITTEE ORGANIZES

The Call committee chair (or the council chair if council has not appointed a call committee chair) arranges the first meeting of the call committee. The Call committee meets to begin the process of discernment and to develop a list of preliminary candidates.

The first meeting of the call committee:

- Begin with prayer and devotions. The committee may wish to use the [devotions for call committees](#) on the synod website.
- Appoint a chairperson (if not already appointed by the congregational council).
- Appoint a secretary to record minutes and assist the call committee chair.
- Covenant to keep all discussion of candidates confidential. Rostered leaders work in an intimate context in faith communities. News/rumors of their being considered elsewhere can be needlessly disruptive to the ministry of the rostered leader.
- Review the call process to determine any outstanding questions. The secretary notes key questions to be discussed during the next meeting with the bishop.

CALL COMMITTEE REVIEWS (OR COMPLETES AND REVIEWS) THE CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE

1. The call committee completes the congregational profile if so assigned.
2. The call committee reviews the results of the congregational profile and discusses together the ministry needs of the congregation.
 - What is the context of ministry in the congregation?
 - What are the qualities that might be needed in a rostered leader?

CALL COMMITTEE PREPARES A PRELIMINARY LIST OF CANDIDATES

The call committee compiles a preliminary list of candidates they would like to discuss with the bishop.

Model Congregational Constitution Article VII: Section 3. Only an ordained minister on the roster of the ELCIC or one who is recognized for call by a synod of the ELCIC may be called as a pastor of the congregation.

- Who are the rostered leaders that come to mind as those who might possess the necessary qualities? Who might be available?
- The call committee may also choose to ask the congregation for suggestions and add these to the preliminary list of possible candidates.

Appendix B1: Nominations form.

CALL COMMITTEE MEETS WITH THE BISHOP

Once the call committee has reviewed the congregational profile, discussed the ministry needs for their congregation and initiated the process of considering possible candidates, the call committee contacts the bishop's office to arrange a meeting.

Appendix B2: Agenda for Call committee meeting with bishop

CALL COMMITTEE PREPARES A SHORT LIST OF CANDIDATES

Following the meeting with the bishop the call committee:

1. Decides on the proposed short list of candidates.
2. Shares the proposed short list of candidates with the bishop.
3. The bishop contacts the proposed candidates to ask if they are open to conversation and provides the call committee chair with contact details and the mobility form (if not already provided) for the rostered leaders that are open to having a discussion with the congregation.

CALL COMMITTEE INTERVIEWS THE SHORT LIST OF CANDIDATES

The call committee works with the short list to determine a primary candidate for presentation to a congregational call meeting.

The call committee arranges for interviews with the respective candidates. The following information may be helpful in planning the interview process.

- **Phone interview**
The call committee may consider conducting a preliminary telephone contact to determine the interest and suitability of a candidate.
- **In person interview**
The chairperson of the call committee contacts the candidates, to set up an in person visit. It is recommended that this visit take place at the site of the calling congregation. The congregation is responsible to cover the candidate's costs of travel and overnight accommodation.

Prior to the initial interview the chairperson of the call committee sends the candidate information about the congregation (e.g. a copy of the congregational profile, bulletins, newsletters, a yearbook, year-end reports, etc.).

Before the interview, plan to provide a guided tour of the congregation's facilities and of the community including churches, businesses, neighborhoods of all types, schools, hospitals, recreation facilities, etc. Include an opportunity for the candidate to meet members of the congregation in a pot luck meal, dessert or some other type of informal gathering.

In preparation for the interviews the call committee considers the questions and information they wish to discuss during the interview.

Appendix B3: for Guide for interviews.

An interview feedback form may be completed for each candidate for call committee minutes.

Appendix B4: Interview feedback form

- **Visiting the candidate in his/her congregation**

If the interview process has been favourable, members of the call committee may wish to visit the candidate in his/her congregation for a worship service.

Phone the candidate beforehand both to be sure s/he is leading worship that day and to receive his/her permission to visit. Please note that in some congregations the arrival of visitors might be quite disruptive to the service and to the candidate's ministry in that place.

The call committee follows up with interviewed candidates:

- If the call committee wants to continue the conversation with a candidate they follow the process for selecting a primary candidate to present to the congregation for call.
- If the committee decides to remove a candidate from consideration, the call committee chair communicates the decision to the bishop and the candidate both orally and in written form.
- If a candidate decides that he/she is no longer interested in continuing the call process with a congregation, s/he should notify the call committee chair and the bishop.
- If the committee decides that none of the candidates are suitable, the call committee chair should contact the bishop's office for additional names.

Appendix B5: Sample letters for responding to candidates following an interview

CALL COMMITTEE SELECTS A PRIMARY CANDIDATE

The call committee selects one candidate for presentation to the congregational call meeting.

After prayer and conversation the call committee votes on a motion to present one candidate to the congregation for call. A two-thirds majority of the call committee is required for the call committee to recommend a primary candidate to the congregation for call.

Given a 2/3 majority vote:

1. The call committee chair communicates their decision to the candidate both orally and in written form.
2. The call committee chairperson notifies the bishop and the congregational council of their selection.
3. The bishop contacts the primary candidate and requests that the candidate refrain from talking with other call committees until the process with this congregation has been completed.
4. Congregational council prepares to present the candidate to the congregational meeting for call. See Call process manual [Part C: Congregation calls a rostered leader](#)

APPENDIX B1 – NOMINATION FORM



Nominations for rostered leader candidates

The Call committee is currently gathering a preliminary list of possible candidates for our next rostered leader. If you have a suggestion about a possible candidate, please fill out this form and submit to the call committee chair. The call committee will add your suggestions to their preliminary list of candidates. This list will be discussed with the bishop at our upcoming meeting.

I would like the call committee to consider this person for our next rostered leader:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Synod: _____

Reason for Recommending:

Your Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Congregation: _____ City/Town: _____

APPENDIX B2 – AGENDA FOR CALL COMMITTEE MEETING WITH BISHOP



When the call committee has reviewed the congregational profile, considered the congregation's ministry needs, and prepared a preliminary candidate list, the call committee contacts the bishop's office to arrange a meeting with the bishop.

Preparing for the meeting

Call committee chair: Call the bishop's office well in advance to facilitate scheduling. Assure all meeting participants have access to a copy of the congregational profile, the call committee's preliminary list of candidates and the Call process manual (print or online).

Call committee:

- a. Review the Call process manual [Overview and Guiding Principles](#) and Part B Call committee selects a primary candidate.
- b. Review the congregational profile results and discuss together the ministry needs of the congregation.
- c. Compile a preliminary list of candidates

Agenda: Call committee meeting with bishop

1. Call to Order: The call committee chairperson calls the meeting to order.
2. Approval/amendment of agenda
3. Chair invites bishop to lead the meeting.
4. The bishop leads devotions and prayer.
5. Review of Call Process with the committee
 - a. Overview and Guiding Principles
 - b. Call Process Part B
 - c. Questions about the process
6. Discuss the congregational profile and ministry needs of the congregation
7. Discuss potential candidates
 - Call committee shares their preliminary list of candidates
 - Bishop presents the names of candidates who have indicated, through submitting a mobility form that they are in a process of discernment. The bishop may also present candidates, at her/his discretion, who may be approaching a time of discernment.
 - Finalize a preliminary list of potential candidates.
8. Next steps discussed
 - Call committee prepares a short list of candidates (see page 4 & 5 in Call process manual: Part B)

APPENDIX B3 – GUIDE FOR INTERVIEWS



Preparing for the interview

Review Guiding Principles from the Call Process manual [Overview and Guiding Principles](#).

Decide who will be the “lead” in the interview. (this may be the chair, or may be another member of the committee).

Plan to begin the interview with prayer.

Prepare a list of questions (from the list below, or others that may come from the committee).

Decide who will ask each question based on their interest/comfort with the question.

It is appropriate for the call committee to ask the congregational council to provide "ballpark" compensation information. While the detailed compensation package discussion is handled by the congregational council later in the process, it is appropriate to broadly discuss compensation early in the conversation.

The following are sample call committee questions for candidates. (Add, delete, edit as necessary):

1. Tell us how you were led to become a rostered leader.
2. Describe your preaching style. What things do you emphasize in your preaching?
3. Tell us about your worship style. Are you interested in experimenting with different services?
4. What is your concept of evangelism?
5. How do you feel about pastoral visiting?
6. Are you interested in adult education? Is there a particular program you have experience with?
7. What are your feelings about inclusivity in the congregation?
8. How would you help us involve our young people in the church?
9. What is your concept of stewardship?
10. What do you feel are the major emphases of your ministry? Your top 3 skills?
11. How do you see your role in relation to the congregation council?
12. What is your thought on communion practices? (frequency, type, age of first communion, home communions, etc.)
13. How do you feel a rostered leader can best present a good image for the church in the community?
14. What have been your most satisfying achievements in the ministry during the last year?
15. How does a roster leader mentor and encourage “the priesthood of all believers”?

16. Tell us about your involvement in synodical or national church.
17. What questions do you have of us?

The following are sample questions the candidate might ask the call committee:

1. Why am I of particular interest to you?
2. What has been the most significant event in the life of this congregation?
3. What has been the most upsetting event in the life of this congregation?
4. In what areas do you feel your congregational ministry needs a particular expertise?
5. What formal and informal methods of support have you used in the past to help your rostered leader become a better minister?
6. What organizations in the congregation are the most active and/or successful?
7. What goals have you established for the future?
8. How stable is this congregation financially?
9. What programs have you planned to implement in the next ten years?
10. What areas of your congregational ministry needs particular support/strengthening?

APPENDIX B4 – INTERVIEW FEEDBACK FORM



Name of Candidate: _____

Date(s) of interview: _____

What were the gifts the candidate has to offer your congregation?

What gifts for pastoral ministry does your congregation need that this candidate does not have?

What is the Call committee's decision regarding his/her candidacy?

APPENDIX B5 – SAMPLE LETTERS FOR RESPONDING TO CANDIDATES AFTER INTERVIEWS

Dear *[Pastor/Diaconal Minister]*,

On behalf of the call committee, I want to thank you and *[spouse's name]* for visiting with us as a beginning step toward consideration of a call to *[Church/Parish]*. We were pleased with the openness and depth of our conversation. We felt that the evening/afternoon was most productive.

If it is agreeable with you, we would like to leave your name on our call list with the understanding that we are still in the process of deciding on one primary candidate before we make our recommendation to the council. When we arrive at that point, we will be back in touch with you.

Please feel free to call me at any time, if you have question or concerns. Again, thank you for spending time with us.

Cordially,

_____ Call committee chair

c.c. Bishop

When applicable, include a check to cover travel and/or accommodation

Dear *[Pastor/Diaconal Minister]*,

On behalf of the call committee, I want to thank and *[spouse's name]* for visiting with us as a first step toward consideration of a call at *[Church/Parish]*.

We appreciated your responses to our questions and were glad that you shared your concerns with us.

After considering the challenges and needs of *[congregation/parish]* in light of your strengths and interests, we feel that it would be best to continue our search for a rostered leader in other directions.

Again, we thank you for your time and interest. Our prayers are with you and your ministry.

Cordially,

_____ Call committee chair

c.c. Bishop

When applicable, include a check to cover travel and/or accommodation