

Responsibilities of Church Council in the Call Process

1. Hold an appropriate farewell for the departing pastor. Schedule an Exit Interview.
2. Provide the vision of the congregation around which the new pastor is to be called. Essential in the visioning process is the ability to articulate answers to three central questions:
 - Who are we? (As a congregation what makes us unique, what are our ministries currently, what is our context, etc)
 - Where are we going? (What is God calling us to, what are the ministries we feel called to develop, what outreach do we need to be about?)
 - What kind of leader do we need to get there?
3. Begin work on the Congregational Profile form.
4. Work on the salary package. It is important to communicate the highest possible salary package you can afford to the Bishop's office. As the Bishop's office seeks to provide candidates for the pastoral position, this then provides the maximum level of experience of the pastor which can be made available for consideration. Potential candidates may come in below the maximum figure. Salary guidelines are available on the East Central Synod website: www.ecsw.org
5. After the interview process the council will receive the recommendation of the call committee. Prior to that meeting the president of the council should contact the Bishop's office to help ensure that the salary package presented to the council is appropriately prepared. The council then approves both that call committee's recommendation as well as the salary package. The president of the council should then set a congregational meeting for the purpose of calling a pastor, in accordance with Constitutional requirements. At the meeting the president asks the call committee to present information regarding the candidate to the congregation. After the presentation is made and all questions are answered, the president then invites the congregation to vote on the candidate. The compensation package need not be presented to the congregation unless it exceeds the congregational budget for a pastor that has already been approved at the annual meeting. (This information should be available to anyone asking after the conclusion of the meeting.)
6. If the vote is affirmative, you are to fill out the call and the salary package documents as directed by the Bishop's office, returning them as quickly as possible for the Bishop's signature. The Bishop will then forward the Call immediately to the called pastor. You are encouraged to call the pastor indicating the affirmative vote right after the meeting.
7. If the pastor accepts the call, the president of the church should then work with the Bishop's office to arrange for an installation service for the new pastor.