

## Seven Steps in the Call Process for Congregations in the Southwestern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA



1. The Current Pastor Resigns
  - Pastor's resignation is announced
  - A "farewell celebration" is planned and the ministry is celebrated
  - Pastor and congregation each follow a new path
2. Beginning the Interim
  - Synod staff helps congregation arrange for interim ministry
  - Church council helps keep congregation focused on its mission
  - Congregation continues its ministry
3. Completing the Mission Profile
  - Synod staff and conference call team (CCT) lead an open forum to explain the call process to members of the congregation
  - Information is gathered from the entire congregation as a "snapshot" of ministry
  - Profile is prepared as an aid for the call committee, pastoral candidates, the congregation, and the synod staff/CCT
  - How is God at work in and through this congregation--past, present, and future?
4. Forming the Call Committee
  - A congregational call committee is formed and installed
  - Officers are elected for the call committee
5. Considering Candidates
  - Synod staff/CCT present candidates to the call committee for consideration
  - Names are surfaced through the synod office, interested pastors who self-nominate, and the congregation itself
  - The goal of the call committee is to represent the congregation as it searches for a pastor who can lead them into the future God has in mind
  - What do the congregation and new pastor expect of each other?
  - It's not shopping at the store; it's searching for a partner in ministry
  - Confidentiality is crucial for the call committee in terms of detailed information concerning pastoral candidates
  - Who does God have in mind for this congregation? Be prepared to be surprised!
  - The Holy Spirit is involved in this process -- really.
6. Extending the Call
  - The call committee recommends a candidate to the council who will bring the name to the congregation for a vote
  - A congregational meeting is scheduled for voting on the candidate
  - Bid farewell to the interim pastor
7. Welcoming Your New Pastor
  - Once the call has been accepted, an installation date is set with synod office
  - Welcome your new pastor with open arms!
  - Throw a party! Call your friends! Praise the Lord!

**Throughout the call process, the entire congregation is involved in three activities:**

• Prayer

• Patience

• Communication

**For more information –**

• [www.swmnelca.org](http://www.swmnelca.org), click on Equipping Congregations, then on Call Process

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