

## Indiana-Kentucky Synod Vacancy Call Process

- 1.0 When a pastor resigns, a transition visit is conducted by the bishop of the synod, with the Congregation Council and the resigning rostered leader. The resigning pastor or the Congregation Council President should contact the bishop's office as soon as possible to schedule the visit.

Provision is made for pastoral service in one of two ways:

- 1.1 A pastor serving a neighboring ELCA congregation is appointed to serve as **Vacancy Pastor**. Responsibilities include minimal pastoral ministry and attendance at monthly council meetings. The Sunday worship services are conducted by supply pastors secured from a supply list provided by the synod office;

OR

An Interim appointment is made by the Bishop in cooperation with the Congregation Council. The **Interim Pastor** provides both weekday and Sunday pastoral ministry on a full- or part-time basis as determined by the Congregation Council.

- 1.2 The names of the persons who can assist the congregation in discerning its health and mission, including conducting the Exploring God's Expectations Workshop is given to the Council. The Council Chair makes arrangements with this person to conduct the workshop.
  - 1.3 The person in the synod office who works with the Call Process will be identified. This person will meet with the Congregation Council and the Call Committee (when it is formed) to give an overview of the Call Process.
  - 1.4 The name of the head of the Healthy Congregations Team is given to the Congregation Council to assist if needed in addressing any internal concerns.
- 2.0 The Congregation Council appoints or the congregation elects a Call Committee which is representative of the congregation membership and concerns. The person in the Synod office meets with the Call Committee and Congregation Council to give an overview of the Call Process. A survey is conducted to determine needed leadership skills and interests. From one to three candidates will be submitted to the Call Committee for consideration. The Call Committee has the responsibility of interviewing **all candidates** to be considered for call.
  - 3.0 The Call Committee conducts preliminary interview(s) with the candidate(s) seeking to match the gifts and ministry style of the candidates with the stated needs of the congregation. It is expected that this process will be completed within 30 days of the first interview.
    - 3.1 If none of the candidates are considered suitable, they will be notified that they are no longer being considered for the call. Additional names will then be requested from the synod office.
    - 3.2 Having selected a candidate, the Call Committee refers that one name to the Congregation Council. The other candidates are immediately notified that they are no longer being considered for the call.

- 4.0** The Congregation Council interviews the selected candidate, and may either accept or decline that candidate. If declined, the process is repeated until the Congregation Council and the Call Committee are in agreement on a candidate to be nominated to the congregation.
- 4.1** The Congregation Council refers the name of the nominated candidate for call to the congregation, announces a congregational meeting for consideration of the call, informs the synod office of the date of the meeting and receives the official Letter of Call and related materials from the synod office.
- 4.2** The congregation is provided an opportunity to meet the candidate in an informal setting for fellowship and discussion, and in a formal worship setting.
- 4.3** A Call Meeting is conducted by a representative of the bishop, at which time the candidate and the proposed compensation and benefits package are reviewed and acted on.
- 4.4** A 2/3's ballot vote of eligible voting members in attendance is required to extend the call. The compensation and benefits package requires a simple majority vote for approval. No proxy or absentee ballots are permitted.
- 5.0** The completed call form is signed by the council officers and is forwarded to the office of bishop to be reviewed and attested by the bishop. The call is then forwarded by the bishop to the candidate.
- 6.0** Upon receipt of the call form, the candidate has 30 days in which to respond.
- 7.0** With a positive response, a date is established for the start of service at the calling congregation.
- 7.1** If the Call is not extended or declined, the process resumes with the Call Committee interviewing further candidates.
- 7.2** With the start of service at the calling congregation, the pastor is installed by the conference dean at the direction of the bishop (§12.01.11.C3).
- 7.3** The Installation Service is scheduled by the pastor and congregation in consultation with the conference dean.
- 7.4** In the unlikely circumstance that the Installation Service is conducted on Sunday morning, requiring the dean's absence from her/his normal Sunday morning responsibilities, the expenses of a supply for the dean are the responsibility of the installing congregation.