

NORTHWEST WASHINGTON SYNOD

PROCESS FOR SYNOD CALLS

This document replaces the policy "Call Process for Pastors in a Specialized Ministry" written in October, 1995, and Adopted by Northwest Washington Synod Council June 22, 1996

This current policy was rewritten and Adopted by Synod Council, September 20, 2025

Synod Calls to Church Bodies in Full Communion with the ELCA:

Refer to the ELCA Constitution section 8.60. Official Church-to-Church Relationships.

Synod Calls to Non-Congregational Service

A call to non-congregational service is defined for Ministers of Word and Sacrament in the ELCA Constitution section 7.41.03 and for Ministers of Word and Service in section 7.71.01

(Printed in the addendum to this policy)

General Expectations

General expectations of rostered ministers of this Church are set down in constitutional language and personnel policies. Each rostered minister is accountable to these general expectations.

Specific Requirements

- The rostered minister will meet employment requirements set forth by the place of employment (e.g. certification, licensure, endorsement, etc), or be in the process of meeting such requirements.
- The proposed ministry will be approved for the rostered minister in consultation with the Bishop.
- The proposed ministry will meet the requirements for Synod Calls as described in the *ELCA Constitutions, The Manual of the Policies and Procedures for Management of the Rosters of the ELCA, and Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline*.
- The rostered minister will be a member in good standing of an ELCA congregation and will participate in the life of the Northwest Washington Synod.

Synod Call Process for Rostered Ministers

After ensuring that the Specific Requirements above have been and/or will be met to appropriate standards agreed upon by the rostered minister, Bishop, and place of employment, the rostered minister will complete a letter of intent requesting a Synod Call. This letter of intent shall include information to be reviewed by the Bishop and Synod Council that explains the nature of the Call, the role the rostered minister will hold, and how the Synod Call will enable the rostered minister to faithfully uphold the responsibilities of either Ministry of Word and Service or Ministry of Word and Sacrament.

The Bishop shall present the letter of intent to be received and voted on by the Synod Council at the next Synod Council meeting, whether or not to extend a Synod Call.

A service of installation for the rostered minister called to a Synod Call will be at the discretion of the rostered minister, Bishop, and ministry setting.

The Bishop shall receive an annual report from the rostered minister in accordance with the guidelines and expectations of being a rostered minister in the NWWA Synod. In addition two months before their renewal of call they will submit a notification form to the Bishop.

A Synod Call shall be valid for one year until a change in employment or until vacated by the Synod Council. Refer to section 7.73.01 for Ministry of Word and Service or section 7.43.01 for Ministry of Word and Sacrament of the ELCA Constitution for guidance regarding when it is appropriate to vacate a call.

This process will be reviewed for possible revision by the Northwest Washington Synod Council if circumstances arise deeming it necessary.

Attachments:

Addendum and Synod Call Renewal Form

Addendum of ELCA Constitution References

7.41.03. Calls to Non-Congregational Service. Calls to serve in institutions, agencies, and other entities inside and outside this church may be extended where there is an identifiable relationship of the work to the purpose of the ministry of Word and Sacrament. Such calls involve, for example, the care of the Word, the administration of the sacraments, pastoral care, and activities closely associated with those tasks including oversight in the church and in inter-Lutheran and inter-church agencies and institutions. Care is to be exercised so that positions in the church and in the world that can be filled adequately and appropriately by the laity not be filled by ministers of Word and Sacrament for their convenience or status. Synod councils and the Church Council may seek the advice of the Conference of Bishops in specific situations.

7.71.01. Service under Call. A minister of Word and Service of this church shall serve under a letter of call properly extended by a congregation, a synod council, a synod assembly, the Church Council, or the Churchwide Assembly.

Synod Call and Renewal of Call Information for those serving under Synod Call

The information you provide is necessary for the Synod Council as they consider your synod call and/or its renewal. Please send the completed form to: office@lutheransnw.org. This form is to be filled out each year. Thank you!

Personal Information

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Congregation Membership _____

Current position(s)

Employer _____

Position Title _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ E-Mail _____

Supervisor _____

(In answering the below questions, please use the back of this form or attach an additional page if needed.)

Any Employment Changes within the last year? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please explain:

The number of hours that you are working per week / per month:

Give a brief explanation of your current duties.

How does your position reflect Word and Sacrament or Word and Service ministry?

Is there anything else you would like to communicate to the Synod Council?

Any prayer requests for the Synod Council?

If you are going to have a change in employment, please consult with the Bishop prior to this change.

Signature and date