



SAINT PAUL AREA SYNOD

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

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Dear Friends in Christ,

A transition in called leadership is one of the most generative and exciting times for a congregation. It is also one of the times when anxiety and uncertainty are highest. Whether you are preparing to call a new pastor or a deacon, know that the synod will support you and guide you in your transition. Breathe deeply, listen for God, and know that step-by-step the Holy Spirit will be at work in the process.

I am grateful to present a newly revised call process manual to you. It reflects the work and wisdom of several colleagues on the synod staff, and feedback from dozens of call committee members, interim pastors and other church leaders who have been part of the call process in the Saint Paul Area Synod in recent months.

The call manual is divided into four sections to correspond with the four phases of transition. They include:

- I. Leave Taking
- II. Interim & Transition Team
- III. The Call Process
- IV. Beginning New Ministry

Each section is designed for a slightly different audience. Whether you are a pastor wondering about a new call in this synod, the president of a congregation going through a transition, a newly named member of a call committee, or an interim pastor, I hope you will find the process we describe to be clear and easy to understand.

One of the deep joys of our Lutheran way of being church comes as members of the congregation play a decisive role in the Spirit's work of calling a rostered minister to serve in a specific context. Synod staff is available to support this work even as the bishop attests to the fidelity of the process, but the congregation is the body that prays and listens and finally votes to extend the call to the candidate the Spirit has led into this new call.

At the synod office we pray weekly for congregations in the midst of transition. My prayer is that you will grow in your own faith and be strengthened for service during this time.

Yours in God's service,

Bishop Patricia Lull
August 2023