

Resolution to Synod Assembly to Memorialize ELCA to Revise the Call Process

Whereas research into non-profit organizations has shown that they, like other organizations, suffer negatively during extended leadership transitions,

Whereas the ELCA call process routinely leaves congregations without settled pastors for over a year,

Whereas those long pastoral openings increasingly jeopardize the long-term survival of congregations,

Whereas the ELCA has already created a system whereby candidates can see a 75-word summary statement concerning any congregation in the call process,

Whereas other mainline denominations successfully guard the identity of candidates while allowing congregations to see brief profiles of potential matches to their needs on a denomination-wide basis.

Whereas the current call system continues to be mediated exclusively through bishop's offices and in an information-driven world, this cannot help but create a perception of control and lack of transparency,

Whereas we always trust the Holy Spirit to enhance or correct whatever system we humans devise,

And, whereas the decline of ELCA congregations calls for expediency in filling pastoral positions within weeks or months as compared to years.

Therefore be it resolved that:

The Greater Milwaukee Synod (GMS) memorialize the ELCA at its 2025 Churchwide Assembly to create a system whereby congregations be able to see a 75-word statement by any candidate on an ELCA-wide basis and be able to request additional information on candidates through their own synodical office.

That the GMS furthermore instruct the ELCA to consult with full-communion partners on best practices for maintaining the anonymity of pastoral candidates in the call process.

That the GMS furthermore instruct the ELCA to advise candidates that participation in the summary statement program be fully voluntary.

That the GMS ask that the Church Council of the ELCA be instructed to place this system in operation at the earliest possible date but no later than prior to the 2028 Churchwide Assembly.