

From the “Call Process Manual” - Greater Milwaukee Synod

For Congregational Council Members and/or Pastoral Colleagues

The Exit Evaluation and Interview

No one is in a position to have come to know the Congregation from the intimate perspective of the pastoral office as has the Pastor who is leaving. Both the Congregation and the Synod are well served to explore the insights that pastor has to share as she or he takes leave. It is also a time for the congregational leadership to become more fully aware of dynamics that might affect the next pastorate, both positively and negatively. It is a conversation held in gratitude, honesty and charity.

Both the Pastor and the Council leadership should take the time to look back and reflect on the ministry. The Exit Evaluation Forms on the next page can be used for this process. The material is then shared at an exit interview between the Council and the Pastor and the Synod staff person. This is not a confidential sharing, as we will want to write up a report that can be shared with others who want to know what was learned in the interview, so participants should keep this in mind when responding to the questions.

The Process:

- Expect to meet about 1.5 hours.
- Choose a site that is comfortable and non-threatening, the Council meeting area for example.
- Adopt the attitude that this should be a positive experience, both in terms of the reflection that will be undertaken and the insights which will be gained about the future.
- Begin with prayer
- Synod staff person will facilitate the meeting, using a structured format.
- Council members should be ready to comment, follow up on comments, reinforce, clarify, etc, saying, in effect, “Here is something I can add...”
- Be attentive to both the intellectual and emotional content.
- Honesty, candor and respect should characterize the meeting. This is not a time to “vent”. It is an opportunity to rejoice in the ministry which has been completed and begin to anticipate the future ministry.
- Following the direction of Synod, the process may vary from the structure to allow for spontaneous discussion relevant to each interview’s specific context.
- After the interview has been completed, the process ends with a closing prayer.
- Careful notes should be taken, to be shared with the Call Committee, the Synod Staff, and perhaps even the Pastor(s) being considered for Call. The event should be given structure, but not to the extent that free and open dialogue is inhibited.
- If for some reason the Pastor is unable to be present, we recommend that the exit evaluation process be completed without the Pastor.

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EXIT INTERVIEW FORM – Council Member and/or Colleagues Response

(Please fill out and send to the Exit Interview facilitator at least one day prior to the Exit Interview)

Congregation: _____ Date & Time of Interview: _____

Pastor who is leaving: _____

Person(s) filling out the form: _____

What were the compelling reasons that attracted the Congregation to call this pastor to the Congregation?

1. How did your expectations of the Pastor compare to the realities?
2. Regarding this pastoral ministry: What things have given you a sense of greatest fulfillment? (With which things are you satisfied and pleased?)
3. Regarding this pastoral ministry: What things have given you the sense of greatest frustration? (With which things are you unsatisfied/dissatisfied or displeased?)
4. What do you consider the strengths of the Congregation?
5. What do you consider the weaknesses of the Congregation?
6. What present areas of ministry and program do you think should be retained and continued?
7. What new areas of ministry and program do you think should get emphasis in the future?
8. What do you think that the Congregation can do to strengthen and support the incoming pastor?
9. What would you like the Pastor who is leaving to do to help the Congregation in the transition soon to take place?
10. Are there any critical issues or ongoing concerns that should be addressed in the near future?